

THE TIMES

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THE TIMES

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The costs of differential mortgages, in which interest charges are higher for bigger borrowers.

Social work to open its records

People receiving help from the social services are to be given the right to see their case records, under guidance issued by the Department of Health and Social Security in a move which overturns decades of social work practice. Page 3

Spain by-passes Maltese tactics

Spain is going ahead with invitations to the foreign ministers of the 35 nations at the European Security Review Conference to meet in Madrid next month, despite Malta's obstructionist tactics. Page 4

Maxwell rebuff

Three institutional shareholders of the John Waddington games manufacturer have withdrawn their acceptances to the takeover offer from Mr Robert Maxwell's BPCC shortly before he was expected to announce he had won control. Page 13

Walesa chaired

Lech Walesa was carried on the shoulders of chanting supporters after a stormy meeting at the Gdańsk shipyard called by the government to explain its policies. Minister jeered, page 5

Murder charge

Two leaders of the Ulster Defence Association were arrested as a man was accused of murdering Mrs Maire Drumm, of Provisional Sinn Fein, in hospital, seven years ago. Page 2

Beirut blasts

A French soldier was killed and eight others injured in an explosion in Beirut. Another blast at the Air France office in Beirut killed three Lebanese. Page 4

Trudeau in peril

Mr Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, is facing a clamour from his Liberal Party backbenchers for his resignation. Page 5

Scientific talks

The meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science are reported on page 2.

Football trio

England want to invite a leading world football country to take part in a three-cornered tournament with England to replace the Home Championship, which is being discontinued. Page 17

British gold

Adrian Moorhouse, aged 19, won Britain's first gold medal in the European swimming championships at Rome in the 200 metres breaststroke. Page 16

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Two pits closed in swift action to test militants

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

The National Coal Board yesterday issued its long-awaited challenge to miners' leaders by announcing the immediate closure of two pits in militant coalfields regarded as test cases in the battle over uneconomic collieries.

In the last days of Sir Norman Siddall's chairmanship of the board the industry's senior management has dismissed appeals against the shutdown of Cardowan pit near Glasgow and Brynlliw mine near Swansea, employing a total of 1,400 men.

Miners at Cardowan are holding a secret ballot to decide whether they will continue their opposition to the closure. Mr Alec Hogg, delegate of the National Union of Mineworkers there, said that if the men voted for industrial action the colliery could be occupied.

In South Wales, the NUM area executive meets today to discuss the union's next step following the "complete shock" registered locally by the closure decision.

However, the board is moving swiftly to head off a possible confrontation by ceasing coal production at Cardowan today and putting the mine on a salvage basis from Monday. Priority is being given to the transfer of men to other Scottish pits.

In the absence of Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the NUM, who is in Moscow on union business, a spokesman at union headquarters in Sheffield accused the board of "losing all sense of reason".

It was becoming "brutally clear" that the board was

operating to a government dictate to hit miners' jobs as hard as possible, he said.

"As with all bullies, they will only stop when the membership hits back," he added. The opportunity for the NUM to do so will come on September 15, when the national executive meets to decide whether the time is "appropriate" to hold a secret pithead ballot in the hope of securing a 45 per cent majority for strike action.

The initial response of union leaders yesterday, however, was cautious and pointed away from an early appeal for industrial action.

Mr Don Hayward, union

financial secretary of the area, argued last night that the case for Brynlliw was "cast iron". It had between ten and 15 years of coal reserves "and if they close Brynlliw, they can threaten any colliery in the British coalfield", he claimed.

In a farewell message to the industry, Sir Norman said last night that progress was being made in the fight to become more efficient. But he insisted that the board must move out of "high cost mining capacity" to avoid further losses.

"Last year 12 per cent of output lost £275m—almost three quarters of the £374 deficit grant paid by the Government. That is a drain on the rest of the industry. It has to be remedied with as little hardship as possible to the people involved", he said.

His place will be taken by Mr Ian MacGregor, chairman of the British Steel Corporation, next Thursday. He is expected to take a strong line with the unions

period, and the board's main headache may be in South Wales.

Brynlliw, which employs about 800 men, must close even though it has substantial reserves because it is losing £52 on every tonne brought out of the pit, the board argues. In 1983-84 it is projected to lose £6.5m and its market at an electricity generating station nearby, also scheduled to close, has collapsed.

Leaders of the South Wales miners meet today to decide whether to call for industrial action.

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Ian Botham hitting a six on his way to his first century for England in 22 innings. Report page 16. (Photograph: Ian Stewart).

Thatcher sees Alliance threat

By Anthony Bevins
Political Correspondent

The Prime Minister has changed her view about the future of the Labour Party, with a clear suggestion that she now sees the "Social Democratic Party-Liberal Alliance" as "the true opposition" to the Conservative Party.

During the election campaign, on June 3, Mrs Thatcher said: "The Labour Party will not die. The Labour Party will never die. If you want a good opposition you have got to reform the Labour Party, as Gaitskell was trying to do, to take away the state socialism."

But in an interview in the latest edition of the *Director* magazine, published today, she suggests that Labour will never again take office.

Mrs Thatcher says: "Socialism and Britain go ill together. It is not the British character. I believe that the Labour Party went wrong when the 'wets' were sold nationalization and central state control as part of their philosophy.

"Therefore, when the Conservative Party took over the basic welfare state, which we have done, the Labour Party found the only place it could go was to get more and more state control, and more and more reliance on government for housing and for jobs, until people became the pawns of government. Freedom was sold down the river.

"I am going to make sure that does not come back. In the United States you have two parties based on free enterprise, freedom and justice. Here, the two main parties have two fundamentally different philosophies."

But the Prime Minister goes on to say that the Labour Party, in her own terms, is moving further and further beyond political redemption.

She says: "Socialists have always seemed to me to assume that other people were creating a world for them to distribute. And now the Labour Party is going further and further socialist."

"It wants to control the lives of people more and more. They don't want to sell council houses; they want to order where people live and what rent they should pay. They expand the public sector, so they can say: 'You have to vote for me because your job depends upon it.'

The interviewer asks: "The true opposition to you would be what?"

The Prime Minister replies: "Well, a different way of achieving the same objective."

She is asked: "Within the same framework of free enterprises?" She replies: "Yes, yes."

Mr Roy Jenkins, former leader of the Social Democratic Party, commented yesterday on the remarks that Mrs Thatcher had made during the election campaign: "She wanted Labour to be the main party of

Continued on back page, col 1

Union poll reveals massive support for secret ballots

By David Felton, Labour Correspondent

The Government's assertions that its proposed trade union law reforms have the backing of rank and file union members received significant support yesterday from an internal union poll which showed that an overwhelming number of members supported the introduction of secret ballots for strike votes and the election of

Mr Ben Lexcen, designer of the controversial Royal Perth Yacht Club challenger for the America's Cup, Australia II, is considering legal action against the New York Yacht Club, defenders of the trophy.

In the latest hostilities caused by the New York Yacht Club's repeated attempts to discredit the Australian boat, Mr Warren Jones, executive director for the Australia II syndicate, yesterday revealed that the New York club's agents tried to persuade a Dutch boatyard official to sign an affidavit swearing incorrectly that Australia II was not designed by Mr Lexcen.

At the same time Mr Jones released a copy of a letter from the New York club dated June 11, 1982, signed by the secretary of the America's Cup Committee, in which the Australia II syndicate was cleared to use the Netherlands Ship Model Basin tank testing facilities.

Mr Jones revealed he had been notified by letter by Dr Peter van Oostraten that on Wednesday, Mr Richard Latham, a member of the New York club committee, and Mr Will Valentijn, a close relative of the designer for the US Liberty/Freedom syndicate, gave him an affidavit containing incorrect statements attempting to suggest that Mr Lexcen was not solely responsible for the design of Australia II.

Mr van Oostraten said the charges contained in the affidavit were untrue and he refused to sign it. He said he had previously informed the New York Club that Mr Lexcen was the sole designer.

Mr Jones said he was angered by the New York club's latest attempt to avoid racing Australia II by casting doubt on the Australian yacht's right to compete.

Australia II contests the elimination final in a best of seven races with the Royal Burgham challenger. Victory 83, starting on Sunday.

Continued on back page, col 7

Legal moves, page 18

According to official British

350 jailed Britons may be sent home

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

The first step towards transferring British jails held in foreign countries was taken by the Government yesterday, when Mr Christopher Lush, Britain's Ambassador to the Council of Europe, signed in Strasbourg the Council's convention on the repatriation of prisoners.

The Government now proposes to introduce legislation as soon as possible to ratify the convention.

Thirteen other countries have signed, including Canada and the United States. Another signatory is Spain, where 70 prisoners are on the case-load of the National Council for the Welfare of Prisoners Abroad. Britain intends to make bilateral agreements with other countries.

The council estimates that about 1,000 British subjects are imprisoned abroad for criminal offences.

British in Saudi jail, page 3

Leading article, page 9

not of what I have done but of what they have not done."

Ever since he came to office President Reagan has been plagued by the "gender gap". A recent poll showed that his approval rating among women had slumped to only 34 per cent compared with 51 per cent among men. As there are substantially more women of voting age than there are men, this gap could have serious implications for the President if he decides to seek a second term.

Unemployment and cuts in social benefits have fallen more heavily on women than men. Many are alarmed by his "macho" image on defence and nuclear weapons issues. His

study could be taken as backing for the Government's plans but the legislation proposed "displayed an abysmal ignorance of the way unions are run".

He announced that the IRSF executive would be taking immediate action to implement recommendations of the poll although the final decision will rest with a special union conference.

Union leaders argued last night that the poll should not be interpreted as complete membership support for the Tebbit proposals because it covered a wide range of issues, including calls for greater industrial democracy, which were ignored by the White Paper last month.

Mr Tebbit intends to introduce a Bill during the next parliamentary session covering compulsory secret ballots. It is likely that next month's Congress will authorize talks with the minister on his proposals, but only on the basis of continued opposition to the bill.

Mr Anthony Christopher, general secretary of the IRSF, who is a member of the TUC general council, said last night that "in very simple sense"

it wanted to control the lives of people more and more. They don't want to sell council houses; they want to order where people live and what rent they should pay. They expand the public sector, so they can say: "You have to vote for me because your job depends upon it."

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Follow the Leader

the quality scotch

BELL'S

Old Scotch Whisky
Extra Special

Arthur Bell & Sons Ltd., ESTABLISHED 1825
AND STILL AN INDEPENDENT COMPANY

American women hopping mad at bunny gibe

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington



Task force sails into dispute

The Royal Navy will be left with only eight frigates and destroyers to guard Britain's approaches to the North Atlantic when a task force leaves for New Zealand next week, it was claimed last night.

The claim, in a Press Association report, was queried however, by senior naval sources.

The aircraft carrier Invincible will lead a destroyer, five frigates and five supply vessels on a deployment which will last until next spring.

The report quotes "authoritative sources" as describing their absence as a "calculated risk". It adds that 12 more warships are committed to Falklands Islands duties, three in the Caribbean and one is in the Gulf.

Official sources added last night that the deployment had been authorized only after consultation with Nato's Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia.

Flagpole tied up in red tape

Villagers in Sudberg, Co Durham, have been given permission to put a flagpole on their village green to celebrate the wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales - more than 10 years late.

The parish, near Darlington, blames bureaucracy for the delay. The flagpole needed special authority because it is to be put up in a conservation area. Darlington Borough Council still has to give planning approval for the scheme but the flagpole may be up next year.

Cable TV firm plans arts show

A daily four-hour television arts programme is being compiled for cable television operators by British Cable Programmes, which expects to inject £1m a year in fee payments into British music and drama.

The Government has invited applications for 12 pilot multi-channel cable television franchises.

Thatcher to join world phone-in

Mrs Margaret Thatcher will become the first national leader to take part in a world-wide radio phone-in this autumn when she answers questions for 50 minutes from listeners to the BBC World Service.

British Association



Spending on research up despite recession

Industry has increased its expenditure on research and development during the past five years, in spite of the economic recession, according to a survey of research and development in Britain.

The finding that companies have not cut back on research in response to hard times is a surprising contrast both to their behaviour during the first half of the 1970s when research and development in industry fell by 11 per cent, and to recent talk of declining industrial research.

The survey was carried out by the Technical Change Centre (TCC) in London for the British Association.

"The mood of pessimism about industrial research and development has been excessed", Mr Ted Butler and Sir Bruce Williams of the TCC reported last night when they presented the first results of their science audit. Their figures are more recent than the official statistics on research and development which, they said, were inadequate and published very late.

The TCC's main source of information on research in industry was the Department of Trade and Industry, which made available preliminary results of its 1981 survey on the subject. Those have not been published by the Government because the results have not yet been analysed.

Industry spent 63.5 per cent more on research and development in 1981 than in 1978, the year of the last published official survey. In that time research costs are estimated to have risen by 55 per cent, leaving a real increase in spending of about 5 per cent.

The TCC team is also investigating university research and development where it has found that "the amount of information about research expenditure is pathetically small and late in its publication".

Strike at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant halts production

A strike by 1,800 assembly workers at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port car factory in Merseyside brought production to standstill yesterday.

The men are believed to have taken their action after instructions from Coventry, where negotiators from the Transport and General Workers' Union are discussing the company's annual pay claim, with the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas).

All car assembly work at the factory was brought to a halt, although the remainder of the 5,150 employees at the factory remained at their posts.

The men on strike are demanding a £25 wage increase across the board, a reduction in working hours, increased overtime payments and improved sickness and holiday benefit.

The Ellesmere Port factory normally produces 38 vehicles an hour: 20 Astra cars, ten Astra vans and eight Chevettes.

A week-long strike by 1,300 boilermakers at Cammell Laird shipbuilders in Birkenhead Merseyside, ended yesterday.

Negotiations are to continue on the question of the men's pay since the management took action against them.

The ending of the strike will renew the yard's hopes of winning a Royal Navy order for a Type 22 destroyer. Failure to

win new contracts by next spring could mean 1,400 redundancies as part of British Shipbuilders' cuts across the industry.

Cammell Laird's managing director, Mr Alastair Lambie, said that the boilermakers' decision to go back was vital to the yard's future.

It was an unnecessary dispute, but the men made a very necessary decision for the survival interests of the yard. It must be welcomed that the men have recognized that, he said.

Shipyard workers who brought work on a Royal Navy destroyer to a standstill on Wednesday agreed to return to work "under protest" after a mass meeting yesterday.

About 270 semi-skilled men had walked out at Swan Hunter's Neptune yard on the Tyne in a dispute over redundancies and the stoppage spread to the rest of the workforce.

A Swan Hunter spokesman said he was optimistic that the issue could be resolved.

Dismissed journalists wait on talks

By Ronald Faxx

Three hundred journalists in Manchester dismissed by Express Newspapers over a Christmas working disagreement were last night awaiting the outcome of negotiations in London between the management and officials of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ).

The journalists work on the Daily Star, the northern editions of the Daily Express and the Scottish Sunday Express. They had refused to leave a mandatory union meeting on Wednesday at which they narrowly rejected a management offer to "buy out" their right not to work on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. About half the members were at the meeting when they learnt that all journalists working for Express Newspapers in Manchester had been dismissed.

The union said last night that it had accepted part of a deal amounting to about 5 per cent but refused to give up the right not to work on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day for a £250 lump sum.

Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Employment, has resisted union pressure to increase the weekly allowance to £26.75 in line with an MSC recommendation.

The Government is assured of continued trade union support for the controversial £1,000 Youth Training Scheme (YTS) after the publication today of a TUC guide which urges cooperation.

TUC commitment to the scheme will be questioned at the annual congress in Blackpool early next month, but unions are expected to give their support, with some qualifications, and will continue to press for improvements.

The guidelines were seen by opponents of the YTS as an attempt to undermine opposition at Blackpool, but most of the attention during the training debate will be focussed on ways of ensuring that youngsters on the scheme receive the highest possible allowance and join unions.

The Manpower Service Commission has promised places on the scheme by Christmas to all unemployed school leavers aged 16. Each trainee will receive a £25 a week allowance for the year's vocational training.

Launching the guidelines, Mr Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, said the scheme

would help young people towards a career, but some employers might try to exploit it financially and others might not have the necessary training expertise.

A meeting of leaders of 14 unions which have either motions or amendments on YTS on the Blackpool agenda has failed to reach an all-embracing motion for the Congress, so delegates will have to choose between one motion critical of the principle of the scheme and a second supporting it with qualifications.

The National Graphical Association wants the TUC to reconsider its support for the scheme because it claims it is being used by the Government to create "a pool of cheap labour". The alternative motion, sponsored chiefly by teachers' organisations, calls for stronger union participation and local monitoring of schemes.

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Leading article, page 5

By David Feltos, Labour Correspondent

British Airways' High Court application for a ruling on British Midland Airways' plan to operate a shuttle service between Heathrow and Belfast is expected to be heard today.

BA hopes to prevent its independent rival from competing on the route, after the Civil Aviation Authority's decision to grant British Midland a licence.

If the application succeeds the hearing is expected to be held in October, probably in open court. The case will challenge the CAA's interpretation of the Civil Aviation Act, 1980, in granting British Midland a licence.

Behind the legal move lies the independent airline's recent success in capturing a third of the shuttle traffic to Scotland from BA.

Mr Meacher writes in the Labour magazine, *New Socialist*.

"Though the direct affiliation to the Labour Party of such groups or sects would enlarge our own perception and contribute directly to our policy-making, we have to accept that even if they remain autonomous they may have many common interests with us."

By Our Parliamentary Staff

Mr Michael Meacher yesterday abandoned his consultancy position in Labour's deputy leadership contest and said his rival, Mr Roy Hattersley, had resurrected a 10-year-old idea by advocating an index of poverty.

He said: "There is nothing wrong with the idea. The problem is mobilizing the political support to do something about it."

Mr Meacher, who has campaigned against low pay was speaking at a London meeting organized by the Low Pay Unit, the Fabian Society and the National Union of Public Employees, which is balloting members with an executive resolution to support him.

He said the only solution to low pay was a national minimum wage. Well before the next election the Labour Party and

the trade unions should be committed to a minimum wage of about two thirds of male average gross earnings.

It might raise the retail price index by about 6 per cent, but such an increase, brought in over two or three years, was a reasonable price to pay.

Meanwhile Labour supporters are being urged by Mr Wedgwood Benn to take an interest in "the many Socialist groups that have appeared on the scene."

Mr Benn writes in the Labour magazine, *New Socialist*.

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we have to accept that even if they remain autonomous they may have many common interests with us."

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After a lawyer for the defence conceded there was a prima facie case to answer he was sent for trial to Belfast Crown Court.

At Belfast Magistrates Court, Mr Smith, from the Crumlin Road area, was accused of the murder of Mrs Drumm. He faced 11 other terrorist charges, including possession of a gun and ammunition but those were not put to him at the preliminary hearing.

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East and West getting together

Angry delegates stage sit-in over Malta at Madrid conference

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Spain announced yesterday that it is going ahead with invitations to the foreign ministers of the 35 nations at the European Security Review Conference to come for a major East-West gathering here early next month, regardless of Malta still pursuing obstructionist tactics.

Señor Fernando Moran, the Spanish Foreign Minister, is anxious for Madrid to be the scene between September 7 and 9 of an encounter between Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, and Mr Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Minister.

The foreign ministers' gathering, diplomats explained, would be held technically outside the security conference framework with invitations issued by Spain through the normal diplomatic channels.

Malta has obliged the 34 Western, Communist and neutral countries to adopt this course by refusing to join in the consensus on a 35-page final document dealing with East-West relations which everyone else accepted on July 15.

A formal concluding session of the almost three-year long Madrid meeting would have to be held later.

US signs Moscow grain deal

From Richard Owen, Moscow

Mr John Block, the American Agriculture Secretary, yesterday met Mr Geidar Aliyev, the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister, in what is seen as a further move towards easing Soviet-American relations.

Mr Block described the talks as "constructive, useful and friendly", although some diplomats were sceptical, pointing out that the Kremlin and the White House remained at daggers drawn. Mr Block agreed there was "more work to be done".

Earlier, Mr Block had signed a new grain agreement providing for an increase in American grain supplies over the next five years. He described this as a very important occasion. Mr Nikolai Patolichev, the Soviet Foreign Trade Minister, who signed on behalf of Russia, nodded and said "yes".

It was not the most earthshaking exchange between politicians of East and West but it did mark a slight thaw in the distinctly chilly relations between Moscow and the Reagan Administration. Mr Block is the most senior administration official to visit here since the funeral of President Brezhnev last November.

The meeting with Mr Aliyev, who is a full Politburo member, is seen as a sign that both sides are using the visit to explore a political rapprochement, perhaps eventually leading to an Andropov-Reagan summit. The meeting was squeezed into what amounted to a one and a half day visit.

Mr Block leaves Moscow this morning. He said on arrival on Wednesday that the new grain agreement not only marked a return to more normal trading relations but also showed that Russia and America could work



Moscow mirth: Mr Block, left, and Mr Patolichev after the signing of the grain agreement.

East Germans given missile message

From Michael Binyon, Bonn

Herr Egon Bahr, the Social Democratic disarmament expert, yesterday held talks in East Berlin with Herr Oskar Fischer, the East German Foreign Minister, continuing the top level discussions he has been having there about the deployment of new Nato missiles in West Germany.

On Wednesday Herr Erich Honecker, the East German leader, gave him an unusually blunt warning that if West Germany went ahead with deployment, the Soviet Union would be "forced" to station more medium-range missiles.

He also said that it would be

necessary to deploy effective kinds of operative-tactical missiles with a longer range in forward positions in Warsaw Pact countries.

His warning was prominently displayed in East German newspapers yesterday. He also told Herr Bahr that the missiles the Russians would put in East Germany would reach their targets more quickly than the Pershings aimed at Moscow. But he added that an arms agreement in Geneva was still possible.

The Christian-Social Union, whose leader Herr Franz Josef Strauss met Herr Honecker on a

recent occasion, said that it would be

controversial visit last month, criticized the East German leader's remarks as being of "little help". He said that the threatened deployment in the East raised the question whether the Soviet side was seriously interested in disarmament.

During his visit, Herr Bahr also discussed the DM1,000m (£250m) West German credit to East Berlin. The two countries' close economic links were further underlined earlier this week by West German trade figures for the first half of 1983, which showed that trade with East Germany rose by 16 per cent over last year.

Speaking from his residence in the south of France, he said that he had refused a recent demand by Mr Biya that he should resign as head of the ruling Cameroonian National Union which he retained when he stepped down after 22 years as President late last year.

Mr Biya announced earlier this week that he had smashed a plot to overthrow him.

Mr Ahidjo denied accusations by Cameroonian exiles in France that he had stolen some \$2,500m (£1,600m) of state funds during his time in power and that he was planning to use it to recapture power.

Uganda leaders conclude \$7m pact in Russia

By Henry Stanhope
Diplomatic Correspondent

Four Uganda government ministers passed through London yesterday after concluding deals worth about £4.5m in Moscow.

They met a number of commercial contacts while in Britain, and appealed for investors to return to Kampala.

Dr Luwuliza Kirunda, the Minister of Internal Affairs and leader of the delegation, said that security was now comparable with that in any other African country at a similar stage of development.

The Soviet Union had agreed to grant \$5m worth of credits for a textile mill which had been started with Soviet help in the 1960s, and a school for agricultural technicians.

The Russians also promised to write off \$2m worth of debt.

Insults fly as Cameroon chiefs wrangle

Paris (AFP) - The former

Cameronian President Mr Ahmadou Ahidjo renewed his attack on the protégé he put in power 10 months ago. President Paul Biya, calling him a "weakling", a "swindler" and a "hypocrite."

Speaking from his residence in the south of France, he said that he had refused a recent demand by Mr Biya that he should resign as head of the ruling Cameroonian National Union which he retained when he stepped down after 22 years as President late last year.

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Bonn alarm at 'Times' view on Rhine army

From Our Own Correspondent, Bonn

The debate on the Rhine Army started by *The Times* is being followed closely in Bonn by politicians and military leaders who have expressed alarm at the idea of Britain's handing over responsibility for the defence of West Germany's eastern frontier to a German unit.

The conservative newspaper, *Die Welt*, echoing the views of senior officials in Chancellor Kohl's Government, said that the leading article published in *The Times* on August 17 could have "fatal consequences" if the British Government were to follow up such proposals.

The Times believed that Belgium and The Netherlands would want to follow Britain's lead in leaving the defence of forward positions in Germany to the Bundeswehr. The relevant authorities in Bonn are said to know very well that government circles in Brussels

and The Hague were just waiting for moves in this direction which they could follow. Such a development would be viewed with alarm here.

Die Welt said that the suggestions for a reduced Rhine Army ran into considerable scepticism here. What *The Times* considered as tactical rigidity was, for German politicians and military, the kernel of NATO's aims - ensuring that without widespread operations on the territory of the Warsaw Pact countries, possible attacks from the East were stopped as close as possible to the inner-German frontier. This was possible with the forces as they now existed.

The Germans have also been hurt by suggestions that they play the role of only a junior partner in Nato.

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Seven killed in Kenya plane crash

Nairobi (AP) Seven people - four West Germans, two Italians and a Dutch national - were killed when their small aircraft crashed in the Ingito Hills near the Tanzanian border, about 85 miles south of here.

The accident occurred on Monday but only fragmented reports had been received until yesterday. There were no survivors.

The Italians were identified as Signor Maurizio Mauro, aged 50, the pilot and owner, and his 15-year-old son, Riccardo. The four West Germans were stewardesses of the charter airline, Condor, a subsidiary of Lufthansa. The Dutch national was the husband of one of the stewardesses.

Rain caused school tragedy

Taipei (Reuters) - A provisional education commissioner has offered to resign after 27 girls were killed and 84 injured when a school ceiling collapsed at Feng Yuan near here.

An inquiry has been ordered into the accident apparently caused by water accumulation on the roof after days of heavy rain.

Baby expelled

Rome (AP)-Italy has expelled a two-month-old Venezuelan girl who spent seven days in a Rome airport transit lounge after a legal battle over her adoption. She was put on board a flight for Caracas, accompanied by a childless Sicilian couple who had brought her to Rome last week.

Bride's suicide

Delhi (AFP) - A teenage bride burnt herself to death, saying that her in-laws had refused her food as part of pressure tactics to force her father to increase her dowry. It was the latest in a long series of "dowry deaths."

Hijack appeal

Seoul (Reuters) - South Korean prosecutors are appealing for heavier sentences on six Chinese given six years for hijacking a Chinese airliner to Seoul in May. China has said the sentences are too lenient.

Colombo visitor

Colombo - Mr Gopalaswami Parthasarathy, the Indian special envoy, arrived in Sri Lanka yesterday for discussions with President Jayewardene after the recent attacks on Tamils.

Burma riot

Rangoon (AP) - Muslims' houses, shops and mosques were destroyed in Yandaw, 50 miles east of the Burmese capital, after a quarrel between a Muslim medicine vendor and his Buddhist customers.

Hit reprieved

Pretoria (AFP) - A 16-year-old boy on the film and soundtrack of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical hit, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, has been lifted by the South African censors.

Train deaths

Bangkok (AFP) - Eight people were killed and nine seriously injured in a train crash near Chumphon, 275 miles south of here.

Factory blast

Rome (AFP) - An explosion destroyed a fireworks factory in Borgorose, 60 miles north of here, killing five people. A sixth person was reported missing.

China in space

Peking (Reuters) - An experimental Chinese satellite has returned to Earth after a successful five-day mission.

Leg appeal

Peking (Reuters) - A Chinese hospital is marketing scented stockings. "In addition to being transparent, soft and elastic, they have a fragrance which will last through at least 10 washings," according to the *Peking Daily*.

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Canadian Liberal Party backbenchers clamour for Trudeau's resignation

Mr Pierre Trudeau's career is burning since the Canadian Prime Minister left on a European holiday with his three sons more than a week ago, there has been an unprecedented outburst of calls for his resignation from backbench MPs of his Liberal Party.

And this week, to add to his tribulations, a Cabinet minister sworn in 10 days earlier suddenly quit for undisclosed personal reasons. He was Mr Roger Stinson, Minister for Mines and Newfoundland's representative in the Cabinet. He has been an MP since 1979.

Suddenly, the Prime Minister's hold on the party and on power seems to have become extremely weak.

Seven Liberal MPs interviewed in a survey by the Canadian Press news agency stated their belief - on the record - that he should step down.

Perhaps the bluntest of the seven was Mr John Reid, a former Minister for Federal Provincial Relations who was passed over when Mr Trudeau put together a new Cabinet on regaining power in 1980.

"I believe it's time for Mr Trudeau to go," Mr Reid, who represents a north-western Ontario riding, said. "He's completed his agenda and I don't know what he is sticking around for."

'Dead' Argentine escapes captors



Señor Kelly: Political crusades led to jail

Buenos Aires (Reuters AP) - Señor Patricio Kelly, a key witness in several human rights court cases who was kidnapped in Buenos Aires on Wednesday, is alive and well after escaping from his captors.

Earlier reports said he had been found dead outside the capital.

Señor Kelly told the police he got away by jumping out of a car. His wife Irma told the independent news agency Noticias Argentinas that he escaped near the Buenos Aires suburb of Ingeniero Maschwitz.

"Patricio is very hurt because he jumped out from the moving car," she said.

An eyewitness reported that Señor Kelly, running and shouting, "I'm Kelly, I'm Kelly, tell the police and Buenos Aires", appeared at an Argentine Automobile club station. A police car took him to a police station.

Señor Kelly, a maverick figure in Argentine politics, was kidnapped by a group of armed men in the capital shortly after leaving his home by car for the city centre.

A police car was on the spot but did not intervene to help him. Señor Kelly was beaten up and driven off in his own car, eye witnesses said.

A police statement said one of the kidnappers was a man dressed in the uniform of an army colonel. He told the policemen that only a minor traffic accident had taken place and they drove off.

A clandestine group calling itself "Free Argentina" claimed it had kidnapped and killed Señor Kelly.

In a brief news conference in front of his suburban home Señor Kelly refused to say now he escaped. His face bruised

he said he had promised a criminal court judge "not to talk" about his experience.

But in a subsequent interview with a Buenos Aires radio station he identified his captors as a man "distinguished as an army colonel and a dozen psychopathic, old professionals from the mob's gang, paid bodyguards".

At the press conference he said his abduction was designed to pressure him. He denied planning his own kidnapping to draw attention to charges he has made against former officials.

Señor Kelly once described himself as "an independent nationalist sharp shooter." He is a colourful figure who began his political career as the leader of a pro-Persian strong-arm group in the 1950s.

Since then he has launched several political crusades against powerful Argentine political leaders which have landed him in jail on seven occasions. In 1957 he made a spectacular escape from prison disguised as a woman.

Lawyer charged over sex tape report

Los Angeles (Reuters AP) - Mr Robert Steinberg, a lawyer, has been charged with filing a false police report claiming that sex films involving Reagan Administration officials were stolen from his office.

"The people's theory in the case is that the films never existed," Miss Martha Revel, the prosecutor, told a Beverly Hills municipal court.

Mr Steinberg attracted wide attention last month when he said he had seen sex films showing two officials of ambassadorial rank; a Congressman; two prominent businessmen; Alfred Bloomingdale, the late multi-millionaire adviser to President Reagan; and Miss Vicki Morgan, Mr Bloomingdale's mistress, who was married on July 7.

Civilians named in new Upper Volta Cabinet

Ouagadougou, (AFP) - A new Upper Volta Government has been formed, mostly of civilians three weeks after the coup by radical Army officers led by Captain Thomas Sanaka against the administration of Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo.

The 15 civilians and five military men in the new Government, installed on Wednesday night, are very young, with an average age of about 30.

Captain Sanaka, who was Prime Minister under Major Ouédraogo before being dismissed earlier this year, holds the offices of head of state and Minister of the Interior and Security.

The new Cabinet includes -

against the Government are running high.

Since returning to power in 1980 after a nine-month Tory tenure of office, the Liberals under Mr Trudeau have had the misfortune of presiding over the worst recession in Canada's post-war history.

The Liberals are resuming the whirlwind - or so it appears - for their haste in engineering the overthrow of the Tory minority government and smashing back power, which in 1980 they had had for 38 of the previous 45 years.

As it turned out, they could not have picked a worse time to return to office, with the economic downturn deepening almost everywhere.

Mr Trudeau, who has been in office since 1968 except for the brief Tory interlude, is the focus of much of the frustration and discontent felt by Liberals as their party's fortunes tumble.

The president of the party, Mrs. June Campagnolo, summed up the feelings of many Liberals, and the hope of many others, when she said recently that the public's dissatisfaction is with the Prime Minister, not with the Liberal Party.

In line with that, a senior adviser to Mr Trudeau was later quoted as saying the Prime Minister will probably announce his resignation by Christmas. In fact, he may no longer have much choice.

He was in Ottawa for a few days on business, enjoying the break from summer holidays in his constituency, where feelings

Minister is jeered and booed in Gdansk

Gdansk (AFP, Reuters) - Workers at the Lenin shipyard here greeted Mr Mieczyslaw Rakowski, the deputy Prime Minister, with boos, whistles and hisses yesterday.

When he finally began his address at 4 pm, it was to between 1,500 and 2,000 workers packed into a hall designed to hold 500.

Meanwhile, workers at the entrance to the shipyard said that a go-slow was in progress in many of the workshops.

The crowd outside the meeting hall grew steadily, as a contingent of militia moved into place round the monument to victims of the workers revolt to December 1970, a traditional Solidarity rallying point next to the shipyards.

Earlier, the Government stepped up its propaganda barrage to discredit Solidarity in advance of possible protests at the end of the month to mark the anniversary of the creation of the independent trade union.

The campaign included only a brief reference to Mr Wladyslaw Jaruzelski, the underground leader in Cracow who appeared on television on Tuesday to announce that he was giving up his struggle and was freed under amnesty.

Newspapers gave prominence to a report by the PAP news agency that a call for a work slow-down at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk, the birthplace of Solidarity, had failed.



Thousands follow Aquino coffin

Mourners marching behind the coffin of Benigno Aquino in Manila yesterday. The huge crowds waved placards such as

"Remember Ninoy", the nickname of the murdered Filipino opposition leader (Reuters reports).

Eyewitnesses said the crowds following the coffin from the Aquino family home to Santo Domingo church about a mile away were almost double the police estimate of 60,000.

The Philippines' police chief, Major-General Fidel Ramos, said yesterday contingency plans had been drawn up against possible disturbances when large numbers of people arrived in Manila for the funeral, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday.

Vanishing politician deported to Austria

From W. P. Reeves Wellington

A former Austrian parliamentarian who disappeared under mysterious circumstances while on holiday in Italy two years ago will be deported from New Zealand to his homeland to face fraud charges.

Walter Paul Renner, aged 37, described by his lawyer as a "political hot potato" was convicted in Auckland yesterday on two immigration charges.

Renner was a leading figure in a property development company which had accumulated debts totalling £1.5m. His counsel, Mr Kevin Gould, told the court that the sum involved in fraud charges against him amounted to £40,000.

Renner disappeared on September 5, 1981. His clothes were found on a beach and he was presumed to have drowned. He is understood to have travelled first to England before arriving in New Zealand in November, 1981.

Under an alias he found work as a machine operator.

Mr Gould said Renner had become an MP in Austria in 1979. His liberal views had led to his falling out with the party leader early in 1981.

According to Mr Gould the strife he caused made him a hot potato. At the same time the company of which he was managing director got into "tremendous financial difficulties" and he resigned.

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MEDICAL BRIEFING

Pigeon peril for heart patient

Mr Keith Castle (above), the heart transplant patient, is home again after a 10-week stay in Papworth Hospital where he is being treated for cryptococcal pneumonia; a very rare and potentially deadly fungal disease carried by pigeons.

Until June this year Mr Castle had not given much thought to pigeons. However, as he has enormous energy he decided recently to repair his roof. Pigeons were getting through the tiles and their droppings were mixing with the dust of ages on the floor of the roof space. It must have been this dust, breathed in by Mr Castle, which contained the lethal fungus *Cryptococcus neoformans*.

He was aware of the infection only because of a fortunate chest X-ray, for the fungus does not give rise to symptoms and serious trouble until it has spread from the lungs. In his case the disease, diagnosed while still confined to the lungs, has been treated with the powerful antifungal agent Amphotericin B, which he has had fed intravenously for four hours every other day. He has now completed two-thirds of the course; for the last third he will be an outpatient. His many well-wishers will be glad to know that the infection is receding.

Pigeons can also carry another form of pneumonia, ornithosis, caused by *Chlamydial psittaci*. Although rather less rare than cryptococcosis, it is however much more easily treated with a prolonged course of heavy doses of oral tetracycline. People whose association with pigeons does not go beyond throwing them the occasional stale crust are unlikely to be affected.

Needless dread

People will notice, but be too kind to draw attention to, the urgency with which the middle-aged man rushes to the lavatory. Surgeons are concerned that this conspiracy of politeness has given rise to a quite unnecessary dread which delays patients from having a necessary, statistically very safe, and quick operation. With a good surgeon, and if all goes well, a man may have a transurethral resection, the internal operation without any external wound, and be back at work within a fortnight.

Although in most men with prostatic symptoms the enlargement can be classified as benign, in some the tissue has turned malignant. There is good news for these patients. Two studies published in *The Lancet* of a new ICI product suggest that soon treatment may be possible without a man having to tolerate mutilating surgery, or the side effects of huge, castrating doses of female hormones.

Partnership problems

Scientists writing in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* have evaluated the effect of a wife's personality and education on the chance of her husband developing heart disease. Data gleaned from 269 marriages followed over 10 years show that if striving ambitious men marry women who have had further education their chance of heart disease is increased by 2.5 times; if the wife works outside the home by 3.5 times. The danger can be minimized if the man chooses a woman with a similar personality to his own; married to an easy-going woman he will fare particularly badly.

New antidepressant

The diagnosis and treatment of depression has featured in the correspondence columns of *The Times* this week, while a small news item drew attention to a new antidepressant, bupropion, trade name Wellbutrin, which it is claimed, can be effective in treating people who have failed to respond to other antidepressants.

Papers on its use were enthusiastically received at the World Congress in Vienna, and reports in *The Clinical Journal of Psychiatry* were encouraging, but while the American FDA shows every sign of approval, rumours of doubt from the British Committee for Safety of Medicines have been heard.

Bupropion, therefore, may join a long list of preparations which are available only on one side of the Atlantic.

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

Correction

In Madhur Jaffrey's cookery article on Wednesday, the recipe for carrots with raisins and dates should have read: "Five medium-sized carrots and 1 medium-sized onion, peeled".

It's just more bigger over there

The US came top of the list in a survey of children's holiday choices published this week.

Alan Franks reports

If you have children between the ages of eight and 12, there is a strong likelihood that at least one of them is, where holidays are concerned, a nomadic, ice cream-loving, snail-hunting aeromaniac. Almost certainly, he or she is a thwarted Americophile.

This much, and plenty more, emerges from a survey just released by MORI (Market and Opinions Research International). It was conducted for Thomas Cook, the travel agents who were aware, like many parents, that the pre-adolescent sector has become, if not the seat of important summer decision-making, then at least a potent pressure group.

After all holidays, like houses and cars, are major items of family expenditure; and even if it is the parent who signs the cheque, it is no less the children who must live with the commitment. They derive much of their fascination from the fact that, again like houses and cars, they occupy the common ground between the two worlds of adults and children.

To influence the family's location for a fortnight, therefore, is to touch the levers of power.

MORI plumped for this age sector because, as director Tim Burns agrees, children younger than eight are hard to communicate with on abstractions or hypotheses. They occupy their own fantasy worlds so vividly that the matter of a holiday's physical placement is not of primary importance. Once over 13, of course, they begin to think in terms of adult behaviour and we have only ourselves to blame for the results of their spines.

MORI began with three groups of children, each consisting of six members. The first comprised girls of nine from working class families; the second middle class girls of 12, and the third boys of 10 and 11 from a mixture of family backgrounds. From these preliminary interviews was evolved a 12-part questionnaire in which 509 children took part during half-term holidays at the beginning of June. They were drawn from a broad cross-section of age (within the four-year span), social class, and region.

According to Burns, the process was a surprisingly educative one for parents as well as for Cooks. Under the code of conduct laid down by the Market Research Society, an adult must always be present at an interview with a child, and one of



the most popular parental misconceptions to be dispelled during these sessions was that children have a sort of holiday homing instinct - a desire to return to the same place year after year.

In fact only 32 per cent wanted to go back, with 64 per cent favouring fresh pastures and 4 per cent undecided.

Of those fresh pastures, North America is clearly the most popular - favoured by half those interviewed - Europe in second place on a 34 per cent vote. Britain claims only 8 per cent, level with Australia and New Zealand.

Sadly, these figures are a world away from reality, since just 1 per cent of the children made it to the States last year, 16 per cent to Europe, none to the Antipodes - but 78 per cent to Britain. The transatlantic lure is best summarized by this quote from an eight-year-old girl: "America's more bigger than all the other countries. The best bit about America is Disneyland. It's got three countries in America, it's got Washington DC, New York and Sidney."

Not that the badly undersubscribed Australia is without its romance, if you heed this 10-year-old blonde: "I'd go to Australia, probably with a girl or something like that."

Burns says that, while he, like many parents, was surprised by the "wanderlust" element in the returns, the penchant for America was predictable. "As you can see, although few have been there, there is a certain level of knowledge that all children share about the States, partly from the TV of course, but also from the importation of what you could call the McDonalds culture . . . the country appears to them to be bigger, brasier, livelier and more exciting, all aspects which are very important. In this respect, America is a childlike country."

It is not just cost that inhibits parents from taking family holidays to America; there are the four other disincentives of food, healthcare, heat/climate, and travel problems, none of which loom nearly as large in a United Kingdom venture. What parents are obviously failing to grasp is that "Abroad" is not just a concept, it is actually another country.

In the words of this nine-year-old girl: "Abroad there'll be nicer beaches and the sea is warmer, the beach will be warmer, there'll be sand." Sentiments echoed by another girl with three years more experience of these matters: "Abroad you get a better sun tan than you would here." Yet the harsh truth is that only 37 per cent of the sample

have already travelled abroad, compared with the total of 79 per cent who still want to go for a first or subsequent time.

Parents also have much to learn about family democracy. In 84 per cent of the cases, the decision on where to go is taken by "Mum or Dad only", while the children hold sway in only 16 per cent of households.

Girl aged 12: "Well, my parents decide where to go and ask us if we'd like to go there." Girl aged nine: "We have this quiz, who goes where, and my Dad normally wins."

Aeroplanes are the most popular means of getting there with 47 per cent of the vote, followed by hovercraft (27), ship (16), train (eight), car (six) and coach (one). Sea travel, of course, has its problems, as this 12-year-old girl explains so graphically: "You start to get excited, I love going on ferries, then you start to get ill."

Taking all forms of travel together, only 27 per cent said they felt sick - in some cases, like this boy of 11, for unexpected reasons: "Setting off you start feeling sick sometimes because you are so bored and can't wait."

Among girls, hotels emerge as the favourite accommodation, for excellent reasons such as these, both from 12-year-olds: "A hotel is posh, you meet new people"; and: "In a hotel

you get room service, if you make a mess it's all cleared up for you."

Boys share the judgment, but with a figure of 39 per cent compared with the girls' 53 per cent. For both genders, a camp site is second choice and a villa third.

The top five desiderata at hotels

are swimming pool, restaurants and bars, indoor games, nice beds and outdoor games. "Fitted carpets and a waiter to bring my food by the pool," says a 10-year-old girl.

"Marble tiles in the corridors so

says a male contemporary.

Ice cream tops the list of

favourite holiday fare (only two per cent declaring it "horrid"), but all the other popular options (fish and chips, soup, fried chicken and french bread) score in the high eighties or nineties. In the hate poll, stools just oustrip frogs legs, with octopus only slightly less loathsome.

The ten "most fun activities" are,

in order: staying up late, swimming

in a pool, playing on the beach,

going to an adventure playground,

attending parties/barbecues, swim-

ming in the sea, playing with other

English children, boating and water

sports, going to discos, and eating in

a restaurant.

Less fun activities include going

for a drink with Mum and Dad,

watching parades and playing in

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No surrender

Where is the instrument of surrender signed by Major-General Jeremy Moore and General Menendez in the Falklands? Ian Kerr, who is marketing framed reproductions of a contemporary photocopy at £19.90 each, says no one can tell him the whereabouts of the original. It is officially denied that Moore has it, though the late Lord Montgomery certainly kept for the rest of his life the surrender signed at Lumben Heath. That document passed to the Imperial War Museum, with Monty's caravan and other papers, after his death. "Is the Falklands surrender on Maggie's doo door?", Kerr asks irreverently. My PHSnook in Downing Street sneaked a look, and it's not.

Bitter

The campaign for Real Ale has declared war on an International Lager Festival, and banned its promoters, Watney Mann and Truman, from next month's Great British Beer Festival in Birmingham. There is indeed little international about the lagers featured. Carlsberg is brewed in Northampton, and Fosters and Holsten Draught come from Morlake. Holsten Diet Pils is brewed in Hamburg, but bottled at Isleworth. Lagers brewed here are weaker than their continental counterparts and, though they thus pay less duty, their price is 10p to 15p a pint more than is charged for the more flavourful and traditional English bitter. The British Beer Festival organiser, Tim Webb, says: "Watney's are cynically using the festival idea to promote lagers only weeks before taking part in the biggest festival of traditional British beers. We could not let them get away with it." I'll drink to that.

• In California, a PHSout reports, there is a French restaurant next door to a dealer in gemstones. They are jointly called Chic-by-Jewel.

Shrinking

As a bookseller Sigmund Freud has come a little closer to my office. His likeness, sculpted by Lynn Kramer, presided for years behind the counter of Bernard Stone's shop in Covent Garden. Now Stone has brought Siggy, as old customers know him, to Lamb's Conduit Street, Bloomsbury, and just in time for the street fair. New customers mistake Freud for an uncooperative assistant, and complain of his extreme tactfulness. This will not change, I fear, when he is shortly joined by Leonardo da Vinci.

Skin deep

Here is another winning sausage joke, this one from Mrs F. M. Pelling of Much Hadham: A be-pecked husband was sent to buy some steak. "Here you are, sir," said the butcher, "tender as a woman's heart." "In that case," replied the man, "I'll take a pound of sausages."

BARRY FANTONI



'But darling, they sell perfectly good hamburgers at Paestow'

Best of Spike

Pauline Scudamore of Upper Cheyne Row, SW3, is guaranteed a pretty funny mailing in the coming weeks. She is appealing for anecdotes to include in an authorized life of Spike Milligan. Milligan is at present in South Africa visiting an elephant he has adopted and named Mrs Thatcher, and only yesterday my colleague on the *Daily Mirror* was reminiscing that he once found Spike in the early hours in Soho, sitting alone in a large cubicle. When the lady who is now his wife was sent to Milligan as a temporary secretary, the first letter he dictated to her went: "Dear Pope, I am not going to be a Catholic any more if you do not stop experiments on animals. You're semi-loyal servant, Spike." Yet when I attended a reunion of the Spike Milligan Old Comrades Association I was surprised how uncommunely they were: "Spike Milligan's wholly unreliable," one complained. "My invitation to this party gave completely the wrong address, and none of my friends here got one at all."

Michael Poemney, books merchandise controller for W. H. Smith, will be displeased to see this item in the latest issue of the WES paper, *Newslink*. Poemney explains to an offended manager that it was only decided to stock the book *101 Uses for the Unemployed*, from which my illustration comes, because it would be "news" if they did not. "If we were to buy it?" Poemney argues, "it's lot more attention and sales would be drawn to the book than would otherwise happen". So instead they plan to "sell it but do nothing particular to promote it". And still they get attention.

PHS

George Brock on the problems of interpreting crime statistics

Mugging: what is the truth?

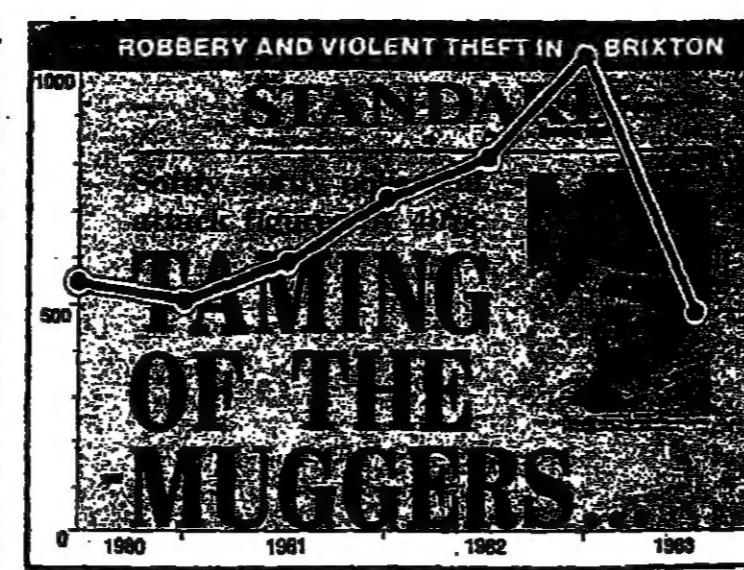
To judge by the confidence of the headlines which appear as a result of almost any official announcement, good or bad, about crime rates, the figures should command respect for their accuracy and authority. Percentages and unrounded numbers sound so scientific. But behind the headlines, such respect seems curiously lacking. Take Mr James Anderson, Chief constable of Greater Manchester, last year: "What precisely do the statistics tell us about the state of criminality in the nation and what do they suggest should be done about it? Very little, is the answer I would give."

Or the Police Federation magazine, in the same year: "No informed person regards the existing criminal statistics as the most reliable indicator of the state of crime." Or the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane, in the House of Lords: "So far as the statistics are concerned, I propose to say nothing, except that they are mostly misleading and very largely uninterpretable."

Last week, the police in Lambeth released figures showing that crimes classified as "robbery" and "other violent theft" had fallen during the first six months of this year compared with the same period last year (see table). This swiftly translated into "Muggings down 40 per cent" in the headlines, with an accompanying glow from local senior police officers. "I personally feel that we are winning the battle of Brixton," said one headline among many when the figures - which looked considerably less sensational with non-mugging robbery and theft subtracted - were announced.

In the case of Brixton during the first six months of this year, the local head of the CID, Chief Superintendent Ray Adams, is sure that the "middle band" of robberies - street robberies - is the one that has fallen as a result of new tactics in the area which include "targeted" surveillance of likely locations and suspects, more officers on the streets, and close attention to community cooperation. "It's an opportunist crime and we've cut down the opportunities," he said this week.

Other kinds of crime in Brixton, and the rest of Lambeth, have remained at much the same level as before, suggesting that the special attention given to street robbery recently may have had real effect. Whether the figures stay down will depend what lies behind the drop. Street robbers have sometimes turned out to be few in number but very active: a handful of people may commit dozens of offences. If the right handful have been caught, the effect on the statistics can be long lasting. If, however, extra policemen on the street are simply deterring robbers who are waiting for quiet



statistical categories "robbery" and "other violent theft," which draw in a much broader range of offences. They cover anything from a shotgun raid on a tank or shop to a purse snatching. This crudity inflates the row over the Yard's decision to release figures for the colour of suspects in these categories alone. "The Yard blames black muggers", said one headline among many when the figures - which looked considerably less sensational with non-mugging robbery and theft subtracted - were announced.

Crimes figures should be handled very gingerly. Mugging generates more political heat than any other crime, and is at the same time one of the most difficult to count precisely.

Legally, there is no such thing, and the word is loosely used to refer to a host of different classifications which policemen and academics have used to sift crime reports and statistics. For the purpose of the most detailed internal analyses, Scotland Yard's G10 statistical branch defines mugging as "the offence of robbery of personal property in the open when there is no previous association between assailant and victim." (The standard definition of robbery automatically implies the use or threat of force.)

The kid glove general sitting on a powder keg

She was upper-class and well educated. Her hair was cut short and the dupatta which she wore in deference to the Islamic dress code, was screwed up around her shoulders like a college scarf. She was from Lahore, always a cosmopolitan city. It is the principal city of the Punjab, Pakistan's richest province.

Lahore holds the key to the future of Pakistan. The disturbances in Sind are distressing to the martial law regime of General Zia ul-Haq, but they can be controlled. But if the Punjabis were to rise as well, General Zia would be doomed.

The woman sat in her lawyer's office, sipping a delicately flavoured jasmine tea. Her husband, one of the Punjabi leaders of the Tehrik-i-Jihad, is in jail. The name of the party translates as "Movement for Unity", and it is one of the eight banned political parties forming the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy which, on August 14, Pakistan's independence day, launched a campaign of civil disobedience, aimed at ending martial law, restoring the 1973 constitution and forcing immediate elections.

In a pre-emptive swoop, the martial law authorities locked away the great majority of the leadership of all the dissident and officially "defunct" parties, an action which has proved remarkably effective.

"People keep ringing up", the woman complained. "They are enthusiastic, they want to go out and court arrest, but they don't know who to give their names to."

General Zia's regime has followed up the pre-emptive arrests with shows of force wherever demonstrators have turned out on the

almost level, while the number of reported burglaries rose steadily - a change perhaps explained by the rapid spread of home insurance policies which require break-ins to be notified to the police.

Other studies have shown that the rate of reported crime can fluctuate out of all relation to the real rate at which it is happening; others that the ways in which policemen write off certain incidents as "no crime" - a practice known as "cuffing" - varies enormously, from area to area. During the past 10 years, the ways in which local statistics were occasionally used to grab lurid headlines caused enough concern at the Home Office for the launching of several studies to correct some of the wider misapprehensions. Much more recently, sterner measures have been taken. Since this summer, local forces inside the Metropolitan Police may not release their own figures until the raw material of the crime reports has been forwarded to the central statistical experts for vetting.

This still leaves the process private and ill understood. The compilation and use of crime figures is becoming one of the elements in the accountability battle being waged between Scotland Yard and the GLC and boroughs which have established inquisitive police committees. The figures in Brixton have also been, and still are, a weapon in the post-Scarman debate inside the police about crime strategies.

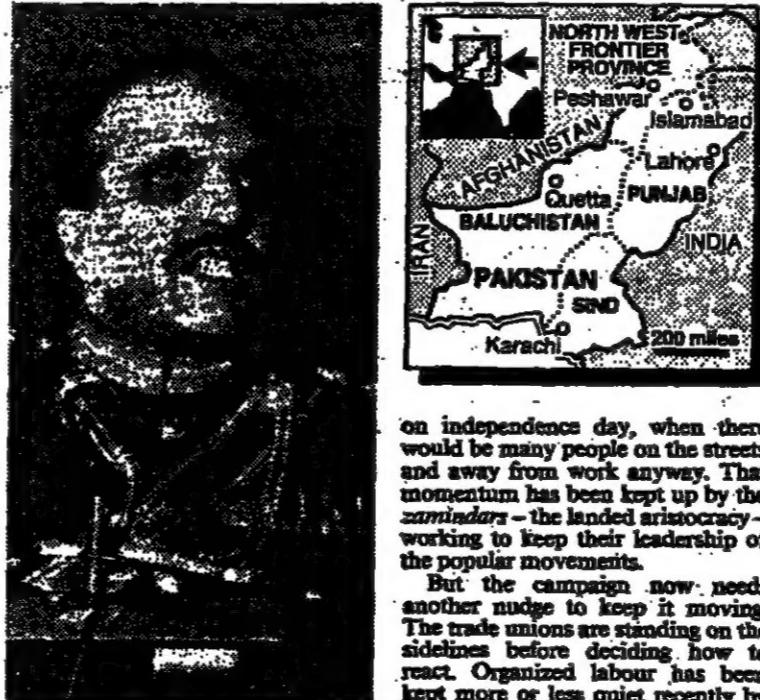
When Scarman's post-mort proposal first appeared, the police went on the offensive to discredit his proposals. The chairman of the Police Federation told his members that "saturation" policing was the only answer to mugging; mugging had doubled since the riots, said the *Daily Telegraph*; it was Britain's "top crime", said the *Daily Mirror*, and the Deputy Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard claimed that Scarman had undermined the police's ability to act decisively. All this has now faded into silence and been replaced by an optimistic "softly softly" front, and cautious celebration of the new figures.

None of this is likely to satisfy the voices calling for greater accountability for the Metropolitan Police, who would like, among other things, the power to examine and vet the machinery which turns out crime figures. In the words of Walter Easby, head of Camden Council's police committee support unit: "The police are a huge nationalised industry. What other one of those would let so much activity go by without proper accountable auditing?"

This is exactly how Americans would like their president to relax and it is another example of Mr Reagan's apparently effortless ability to do the things most likely to elicit sympathy and warmth from his fellow countrymen. Assuming that he does decide to run next year - and there is not a lot of doubt about it - it is the almost universal view of American commentators that this instinctive support will secure his election.

This is a phenomenon worth thinking about. What the conventional wisdom is stating is that Reagan will get a second term partly because American presidents normally do get second terms but mainly because the American people, if forced to choose, would rather have a nice guy in the White House than a genuinely effective president who goes without saying that a man like Jimmy Carter, whom the American people came to, the conclusion is not "nice" in the required sense, under the American system cannot be an effective president, but we are now hearing something more startling than that. The implication is that there is very little that could be perpetrated or left undone in American domestic or foreign policy between now and November 1984 that would make much difference to the outcome of the election.

Those who find this sobering proposition unpalatable have two possible escapes, neither entirely satisfactory. The first is to say that



on independence day, when there would be many people on the streets and away from work anyway. That momentum has been kept up by the *zamindars* - the landed aristocracy - working to keep their leadership of the popular movements.

But the campaign now needs another nudge to keep it moving. The trade unions are standing on the sidelines before deciding how to react. Organized labour has been kept more or less quiet recently by one or two large wage settlements. Those to benefit include all government servants, a piece of bribery that may well cost a good deal in inflation later but removes a present possible cause of discontent.

President Zia has been lucky with the weather too. Good monsoon rains have dampened demonstrators' ardour, and the floods have given them plenty to do at home protecting their crops and houses.

And even in Sind, the regime's policy of restraint, which allowed the first day's demonstration to go off virtually unmolested by the security forces, and which has still prevented the imposition of curfews of however limited scope, may have helped damp down the revolt.

But the fuse has been lit. Of course, fuses sometimes sputter and go out. All Pakistan is now waiting and watching to see whether this one has sputtered or whether it will ignite an explosion of popular resentment against six years of military government.

Michael Hamlyn

How Poland's silver screen has lost its glitter

It is 8pm, the cinema booking office has been shut for half an hour - "sold out", says the notice - and inside the first mind-deadening feature films were produced in Poland: in 1983-84 only 20 to 25 will be made. This is partly a financial dilemma: equipment is outdated, new cameras and video equipment are needed but everything requires more hard currency than the film industry has. It does not even have many zloties. Thirty-one cinemas closed in 1981, 53 last year. Audiences are smaller.

In an attempt to attract people back to the cinema, the Poles are treated to a staple of historical and costume dramas, comedies and horror films. Some money is spent on Western films - *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Empire Strikes Back* are both showing in the capital - but only those guaranteed to draw the crowds and that do not ideologically offend are shown. The chairman of the television authority has decided to close down the whole of the second channel - there is now no choice of viewing - because of technical

shortages, but as a result the natural testing ground for film-makers has disappeared.

The nub of the problem, however, is political. Andrzej Wajda, who is finishing a film about a Polish prisoner-of-war who is executed after falling in love with a German woman in wartime Germany, is the Polish film industry's biggest earner of hard currency. This is because his films are internationally acclaimed. But his *Man of Iron* - about the birth of Solidarnosc - cannot be shown in Poland and Wajda himself was edged into resigning from the presidency of the Film-makers' Union. He has also been dismissed as a studio chief. That means the industry's biggest earner has been denied any decisive say in the moulding of Polish film strategy.

The best example of how standards of excellence are being subordinated to political expediency came last year with a decision not to show a film by Krzysztof Boguszak entitled *The Interrogation*. It depicted a woman, played by Krystyna Janda, who was arrested in the 1950s on trumped-up charges

and was brutally interrogated. It is essentially an historical film about a particularly dark period of Polish experience. According to a secret transcript of a meeting held in the Ministry of Culture after the showing of the film, most of Buguszak's peers praised its artistic quality but warned that "a film of such passion will evoke great passions in return". This was a damning criticism: anything that could stir up political emotions has been excised from cultural life.

The result is that Poland's most talented film directors - Wajda, Krysztof Zanussi, Jerzy Skolimowski - work as best they can abroad and the crisis of the country's cinema deepens. At home a commission including a director, a cameraman and a critic has been set up to recommend how the industry can be made profitable again. Film-makers and audiences are hoping that the commission not only comes up with appropriate answers but also asks the right questions.

Roger Boyes

David Watt

Giving the voters what they want

You can tell quite a lot about politicians from their holiday photographs: Harold Macmillan's penchant for pictures of himself in plus-fours surrounded by 12-hole aristocrats; Ted Heath's sailing shots; John Kennedy playing touch football on the Hyannis beach; Lyndon Johnson prodding steers on the banks of the Potomac; Harold Wilson seen guarding the approaches to the Channel from his Scillies cottage - all these were highly revealing because they displayed the kind of person the subject was supposed to be when he wasn't being a politician. This is a matter of some importance in the image-building business for voters like to identify with "the real person" behind the official persona or at least to share a little of his fantasy life.

All this is true and sets realistic limits to Mr Reagan's popularity. But the fundamental point remains intact. The Atlantic alliance could fall apart, another Middle East war could break out, and another recession of quite serious dimensions be created under the Administration's monetarist aegis without revering Mr Reagan's fortunes. People would simply say: "Well, OK, he's not the greatest, but he did his best and he's a hell of a nice guy."

The alternative response - and presumably the one that would be adopted by Mrs Thatcher - is that only disappointed Keynesians would delude themselves that Reagan will win in 1984 *in spite of* his policies. On the contrary, Reagan's popularity is due as much to his robust conservatism as it is to his boyish smile and winning ways. The American people, like the British, have cast off the shackles of liberalism and are now ready to applaud a leader who is publicly committed to rolling back the frontiers of the state at home and the menaces of communism abroad.

But the trouble with offering this as the chief explanation of Reagan's popularity is that Reagan has been so bad at following his own prescriptions. Monetarism, low budgets, low taxation, "supply side" growth - all these have been tried and either found impossible or wanting, then rejected in favour of something else and then tried again - and all without producing the lasting prosperity that was originally promised. The American economy is at last having its boom but interest rates and unemployment are at fearful levels and nobody has any great confidence that it will last. As for all the anti-Soviet rhetoric, there is nothing to show for it except an oversize defence budget which the Congress (not exactly insensitive to public opinion) has refused to pass. Moreover the internal relations of the Government are a shambles. Hardly a day passes without some press story of major rows.

The average American voter who observes all this cannot be expected to share the private view of most politicians and officials in Western Europe - namely that this is almost certainly the most dangerously incompetent American administration since the Second World War. But he is aware that the Conservative promise of cool, profitable, minimalist government could hardly be further from fruition. What saves the President from the fate of Jimmy Carter, who was actually more efficient, is the lack of a plausible Democratic opponent - and the national reverberations of an axe wielded on a California ranch by a nice guy in a lumberjack's shirt.

Philip Howard

Serving for a hole in one

If only I could get rid of the enforced errors, I should be a champion. The service is going better this summer. Well, put it this way: there are marginally fewer double faults, and the in-swinging first service delivered with a stiff arm and a hideous grimace has occasionally touched the line of the backhand court, and crashed into the net like a startled pheasant. But the backhand has developed a nervous and painful scoop that lobes the ball gently up towards the net; and the volleys have been flying off of however limited scope, may have helped damp down the revolt.

But the fuse has been lit. Of course, fuses sometimes sputter and go out. All Pakistan is now waiting and watching to see whether this one has sputtered or whether it will ignite an explosion of popular resentment against six years of military government.

The trouble about having a mother who won a Wimbledon doubles championship is that one thinks that tennis ought to come naturally by birthright, without coaching or practice. Every summer after watching the professionals at Wimbledon make it look easy, I think I am going to be a champion at last this year. Then on holiday I get out on the court, and fantasy gives way to reality and 0-40, set point, double faults. Are you quite sure it was dammit?

Mind you, I blame the tools, like any bad workman. The racket is an obsolete pre-war make called "the Improved Phenomenon". It has lost a string or two at the edges, and has been warped by the Scotch mix of 50 summer into a lopsided and sinister irregularity like a grinning face. The court was home-made in 1931, when news of this strange new game had penetrated deepest Ayrshire, and everybody who was anybody in the county suddenly had to have a tennis court. The qualifications of a fine gentleman are to eat à la mode, drink champagne, dance jigs, and play tennis - Thomas Shadwell in the seventeenth century. They are still being sold tennis balls within 50 yards of where I am standing now. They will present a pretty puzzle to future archaeologists. A factory for manufacturing cult objects; or some sort of ritual trading system, like the shells of the Trob



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M MITTERRAND EXPLAINS

In his first major explanation of French policy in Chad, President Mitterrand has emphasized that French troops would not be restricted to "purely defensive retaliation" if attacked, and blamed Libya for escalating the fighting in the long civil war. This was a sensible acknowledgement that once seriously committed to military action, the French would find attack the best means of defence; it simultaneously warned Colonel Gaddafi that he should permit a peaceful settlement now rather than risk greater loss of face after a direct clash develops between French and Libyan troops.

By stating that while partition would be unacceptable, a federal solution might be possible and that he expected the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and United Nations to help arrange peace talks, President Mitterrand was making it easier for the Libyan leader to back down. But neither the OAU nor the UN have proved effective in such crises in the past. If it does come to war, Mitterrand has prepared the French public and answered his critics by pointing out that the slow buildup of French forces had both postponed the clash and revealed Libya to all as the aggressor.

The growing French involvement in Chad requires such delicate handling in both foreign and domestic policy that the president's reluctance to discuss the issues fully in public is understandable. But his careful answers to questions agreed beforehand in an interview published yesterday in *Le Monde* have failed to silence complaints that the population is not being

properly informed about a situation which arouses threatening memories of long years of bloodshed in Indochina and Algeria. Media rivals see the interview as a reward for the sympathetic coverage *Le Monde* has given President Mitterrand, and with some justice that a more open statement of policy is called for.

Few Frenchmen trust fully President Hissene Habré as representing their interests in Chad, remembering as they do his hostility as a rebel less than a decade ago, when for three years he held hostage the French anthropologist Mme Françoise Clastrier. They fear that the presence of their troops may encourage him to launch a counter-offensive in the hope that the French would be compelled to increase their military commitment in restoring his position against Mr Goukouni Oueddeï, who formerly, when President, also received French support.

According to a recent survey, little more than a quarter of those polled supported sending troops to Chad, while over half were opposed. President Mitterrand attempted to calm these fears by stressing that French troops would not be manipulated into participating in a counter-attack: "France will not allow itself to be led where it does not want to go". This protestation does not, of course, exclude a counter-attack if provoked by the Libyan-backed forces.

It is important for President Mitterrand that he should not appear to be acting for Washington to all as the aggressor.

President Mitterrand's exposition yesterday contained a tough message for Colonel Gaddafi, warning him to withdraw without causing further bloodshed. This will clearly be strongly opposed by Mr Goukouni Oueddeï, who can expect to gain little at the peace table. The Libyan leader is not famed for his moderation, but it is to be hoped that he will now realize that it is in his own best interests to respond in a reasonable way.

FAR AND FOREIGN CAPTIVITY

Overcrowded and ancient as they are, British prisons would rank respectably high in any Good Jails Guide compiled for the information of the cosmopolitan convict. At least in principle they accept the proposition that criminals are sent to prison as a punishment rather than for punishment, and that gratuitous harsh treatment is not an acceptable means of promoting a policy of deterrence. Prisons reflect the attitudes of the societies around them, and conditions that may appear rugged but humane to an Asian peasant may well seem intolerably rigorous to a western tourist who has been foolish enough to dabble in drugs. To the shared physical hardship is added the isolation of unfamiliarity with language and customs, and separation from friends and family. In some countries so little regard is paid to prisoners' rights that they are in constant danger of physical violence or untreated illness.

The simple individual remedy, of course, is not to get into trouble. But as international travel becomes easier the number of criminals who land themselves in prisons far from home is likely to increase. Such cases and the sympathy they sometimes arouse can become a significant irritant to good relations between countries, and

even a source of prejudice. The problem is complicated by the fact that sentences as well as conditions vary widely, according to how seriously different societies view each offence. This has been the chief stumbling-block to the development of the Council of Europe's convention on the transfer of prisoners to serve their sentences in their own countries, which was signed yesterday by Britain.

The drugs trade provides some of the most difficult cases. A number of countries near the sources of the illicit drug trade have introduced heavy penalties at the urging of the western countries which are the main markets. They might not unreasonably accuse western countries of discrimination when they call for severity, while urging leniency for their own citizens. But equally it is difficult for a country where possession of soft drugs is a minor offence to make a citizen serve a very long sentence for it, imposed by a foreign court.

The only kind of agreement that is likely to be acceptable must allow for a good deal of give and take. The Council of Europe's convention is based on the principle that all three parties — the sentencing state, the prisoner's homeland and the prisoner himself — should agree

to each transfer. A homeland asking for repatriation will have to make clear in advance the conditions on which it is ready to take the prisoner (including what it means to do about remission, parole, and so on). In agreeing to the transfer the sentencing country will accept these terms. Difficulties would arise if one country considered that the prisoner had discharged his debt to society, while the other regarded him as liable to further penalties. There is room for friction here, but also for compromise.

For many prisoners, including some of the most harshly treated, the convention will be irrelevant — for those held for offences that are not regarded as offences at all at home, for instance and those held without trial, like Mr Kenneth Carmichael, held in Saudi Arabia for debt since 1981. The 16 countries which have signed do not include several where the problem is particularly acute, though the Home Secretary plans to seek bilateral agreements with others. But the convention is a step towards the creation of an international presumption that offenders abroad should not have the penalties imposed by the courts multiplied by the isolation and even hazards of captivity far from home.

FLIGHT PATH TO THE LAW COURTS

British Airways makes its first move in court today in its attempt to get a legal ruling against the Civil Aviation Authority. The authority has granted British Midland Airways a licence to run a shuttle service between Heathrow and Belfast in competition with British Airways' service. Midland is already challenging BA on the Edinburgh and Glasgow shuttles and has taken away a third of its market. Another airline, Dan-Air, has predatory eyes on BA's Heathrow-Manchester shuttle. The competition is threatening BA's domestic profitability. It wants to stop the rot — by stopping the competition.

The 1980 Civil Aviation Act requires the CAA when considering applications for licences to have regard "to the effect on existing air transport services provided by British airlines" of authorizing any new service. The airline argues that if the CAA

had had regard to the fact that more duplication of shuttle services would push BA's domestic services into deficit it could not reasonably have authorized it. But the courts usually take a lot of persuading to substitute their own view for that of a statutory body in these "duty-to-have-regard-to" cases. It is a long-shot law suit, a measure of BA's lack of confidence that if it took the normal route of appeal, which is to the Secretary of State, its profits would weigh more heavily with that umpire than the benefits to the customer of a spot of competition.

Lord King, chairman of British Airways, vigorously defends his recourse to law. "It is my job," he has told *The Times*, "to protect my business, and because it happens to be owned by the taxpayer that does not mean that I am not going to seek the protection the law offers me. As far as I am concerned I operate

proven record of disruption but because of sometimes erroneous or speculative information about their private or political activities.

The personal information collected about an individual should be accurate, obtained lawfully, relevant to the purpose to which it was collected (e.g. job performance) and not disclosed in a manner incompatible with that purpose are some of the principles set out in the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, which the Government hopes to ratify when the Data Protection Bill passes through its remaining stages in the forthcoming session of Parliament.

Unfortunately, the Bill in its present form will not safeguard people who lose jobs through

inaccurate and irrelevant information. Many of these records are held manually and therefore are not covered by the Bill. The Data Protection Registrar will be charged with enforcing the Act. However, with only 20 staff to deal with tens of thousands of computerised personal information systems he will be unable to be an effective monitor.

Thus a Bill which purports to protect personal privacy, will not prevent the increasing use of "monitoring" or "blacklisting" systems and increased intelligence gathering about political beliefs and opinions as we enter 1984.

Yours faithfully,
MARGIE STAUNTON,

Legal Officer,
National Council for Civil Liberties,
21 Tabard Street, SE1,
August 14.

The individual concerned does not have the right to check whether the information is accurate, and sometimes it is not. This information transfer can and does ensure that these persons are unable to obtain employment not because of any lack of ability to do the work or

Heart of dilemma for the Liberals

From Mr Michael Meadowcroft, MP for Leeds West, (Liberal Alliance)

Sir, Bernard Levin's article today (August 24) on the Liberals contained too many mischievous half-truths and glosses to answer individually without missing the heart of the genuine dilemma that has always faced political parties, and which is far more acute when social and economic conditions are as serious as they currently are.

That dilemma is simply stated: should a political party hide or fudge the truth as it sees fit for the sake of electoral success, and then hope that the public will not notice or will not mind if it says one thing and does another? Or should it present its analysis and its programme, even if unpopular, and seek to persuade the electors of its validity?

Roy Hattersley, for instance, now appears to subscribe to the former view. He regularly intones that Labour "has a moral duty to win next time", i.e., any package that can remove Mrs Thatcher from office deserves Labour support. Bernard Levin, and a number of other commentators, also believe that electoral success is paramount and that any debate on strategy and priorities risks offending the tender susceptibilities of our gentle and delicate electors.

For every Bernard Levin enjoining a surreptitious tendency towards populism there are a thousand electors telling canvassers that politicians are all the same, saying one thing before an election and another after it. If Mr Levin has his way that electoral cynicism will be given an additional boost by Liberals and will further delay the day when this country grapples with the enormity of our present crises.

My view is that the public desires consistency, respects integrity, and resents being conned. The electorate rejected the left-Labour alternative at the election not because it was highly ideological but because it neither rang true nor appeared competent. The question for a party, as well as for the commentators and for the public, is the relevance of its ideology not its existence.

Those many thousands of people who join the Liberal Party and who give their skills, money and resources without visible reward are by definition not individuals who are likely to sit and wait for a party "line" to be passed down from on high — however much respect and affection they have for David Steel. They tend to be interested in the formulation and promotion of ideas and there is an appropriate structure

for the public to distinguish between the Liberal Party and the rest of the left. Among the latter he rightly states that the left gives rise to schizophrenia.

Liberalists, on the other hand, have realised (to adapt Francis Bacon very slightly) that "power is like muck, not good except it be spread". This is the foundation of democracy and needs to be taken further than we have taken it in this country.

It does indeed give rise in a highly centralised country to problems concerning means and ends, but it emphatically need not lead to the self-destruction to be seen in the rest of the left.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL MEADOWCROFT,
House of Commons.
August 24.

Defence review

From Colonel James Ferguson

Sir, Your leader, "Rethink on the Rhine" (August 17) does the subject less than justice. To discuss the defence of the central region of Allied Command Europe without a mention of US forces, either in place or as reinforcements, or of the Allied air forces makes the analysis somewhat incomplete.

Neither is justice done to the major contribution made by the Federal Republic to the defence of the region, namely 12 well-equipped divisions and, after mobilization, a Territorial Army of 500,000.

It is true, however, that there has been a reluctance by West Germany to flex the military and political muscles concomitant with her economic power and geographic location. But it is to be said that where this characteristic has been apparent it has been welcomed, not least by those who have painful memories of the exercise of German military power.

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Yours faithfully,
JAMES FERGUSON,
13 Blackhouse Hill,
Hythe,
Kent.
August 19.

Nonetheless, times are changing and the post-1945 generations of West Germans are very active in ensuring that proper weight is given to West German views and interests in negotiations and discussions.

I am not sure that the suggested ceding of command of Northern Army Group would, per se, expand the authority and influence of the Bundeswehr. A German officer already is the overall Neo commander of the air and land forces of the central region. But in any event it is not his job to represent the Bundeswehr, no more than it is the job of the commander, Northern Army Group, to represent British interests.

National interests are best looked after by the ambassadors and national military representatives established in Brussels for that very purpose.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES FERGUSON,
13 Blackhouse Hill,
Hythe,
Kent.
August 19.

Dumping at sea

From Dr L. E. J. Roberts, FRS

Sir, Mr David McTaggart (August 16) criticises me for defending the position adopted by successive UK/BRITISH Governments on radioactive waste disposal in the deep ocean. In fact, this position is soundly based on technical and scientific observation and analysis.

It is not enough for Mr McTaggart to indulge in general criticisms of the "gaping holes" of the careful international assessments that have been made whenever gaps in knowledge were recognised in the scientific work undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency before the very low limits allowed under the London Convention were agreed. It is a hard fact that none of the samples of fish or other marine organisms taken at the dump site has shown any increase in radioactivity above the increase found in any other area of the Atlantic.

The expert group convened by the Nuclear Energy Agency of the OECD reported clearly in 1980 that no hazard would arise from these operations. The London Convention itself requires that proposals for change should be supported by fresh

scientific evidence. No such evidence relevant to the North Atlantic was produced in support of the resolution in February, 1983, referred to by Mr McTaggart. A further meeting of the NEA was held in May, after the London Convention meeting, to examine the scientific evidence relating to the use of this site; this again concluded that the objections to its use were without foundation.

With respect, Sir, a detailed scientific controversy cannot be conducted satisfactorily in the correspondence columns of *The Times*.

The international experts who have taken part in these assessments have published their methods and arguments in full. Mr McTaggart should equally publish his criticisms in detail so that they can be evaluated point by point.

We would, of course, reconsider our policy if fresh evidence pointed to significant hazard arising from these disposal operations; no such evidence has emerged.

Yours faithfully,
L. E. J. ROBERTS, Chairman,
Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste
Executive,
AECL Harwell,
Oxfordshire.

August 23.

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August 23.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Heart of dilemma for the Liberals

From Mr Michael Meadowcroft, MP for Leeds West, (Liberal Alliance)

Sir, Bernard Levin's article today (August 24) on the Liberals contained too many mischievous half-truths and glosses to answer individually without missing the heart of the genuine dilemma that has always faced political parties, and which is far more acute when social and economic conditions are as serious as they currently are.

That dilemma is simply stated: should a political party hide or fudge the truth as it sees fit for the sake of electoral success, and then hope that the public will not notice or will not mind if it says one thing and does another? Or should it present its analysis and its programme, even if unpopular, and seek to persuade the electors of its validity?

That is the difference between Bernard Levin and the working politician that is Mr. Levin's article is simply stated: should a political party hide or fudge the truth as it sees fit for the sake of electoral success, and then hope that the public will not notice or will not mind if it says one thing and does another? Or should it present its analysis and its programme, even if unpopular, and seek to persuade the electors of its validity?

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COURT AND SOCIAL

COURT CIRCULAR

BALMORAL CASTLE

August 25: The Queen was represented by Colonel William Braam (her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for County Down) at the funeral of Sir Francis Evans (formerly Her Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Buenos Aires) which was held at St Patrick's Church, Drumberg, Northern Ireland, this morning.

The Duke of Gloucester is 39 today. A memorial service for Sir George Lodd, Bt, will be held in the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, on Thursday, November 3, at noon.

Birthdays today

At Kenneth Barnes, 61; Mr Frank Cole, 79; Major-General N. L. Cooper, 74; Mr Christopher Isherwood, 79; Sir Ian McGregor, 61; Professor Brian Magrath, 76; Sir Hugh Parry, 72; Mr Malcolm Pirnie, 71; Viscount Runciman of Doxford, 71; Miss Alison Sudholz, 37; Sir Gerald Thorley, 70; General Sir Harry Trott, 66; the Right Rev. M. P. Wood, 67.

Harcup and Hawtenstall Grammar School

Michaelmas Term begins on August 1. Term ends December 31. The biennial anniversary reunion will be held September 10-11. The main musical production, *Robert and Elizabeth* with Andrew Horsfall and Janet Lancaster in the leading roles, will be presented from November 3 to 9. Heads of schools Darren Bentley and Lesley Brill.

Marriage

Mr H. B. Digby and Mrs S. R. McLaren

The marriage took place in London yesterday between Mr Henry Digby, 31, and Mrs Rosalie McLaren, elder daughter Major and Mrs Richard Atkinson-Turner, of Worlington, Suffolk.

Church news

Appointments

The Rev P. W. H. Allen, Curate of Shipton, deacon of Bath and Wells, to be Vicar of Marlborough, Wiltshire, and Wootton Bassett.

The Rev C. R. Andrew Walker, Team Vicar of Winchester Ministry, deacon of Winchester, to be Rector of The Stationers' Church, London.

The Rev K. Barnett, Vicar of St. Michael's, Bury St Edmunds, and Vicar of St George, Chichester, same diocese.

The Rev R. W. Batten, Curate of Knowle, Bristol, deacon of Bristol, to be Rural Dean of Barnstaple, Compton, and Vicar of St. Nicholas, Compton, same diocese.

The Rev G. C. Batten, Vicar of Stokesay, Herefordshire, Priest-in-Charge of St. Nicholas, Hereford, same diocese.

The Rev R. J. Batten, Curate of St. Nicholas Court, Cheltenham, deacon of St. Nicholas, Cheltenham, same diocese.

The Rev D. L. Cawley, Priest-in-Charge of St. Nicholas, Cheltenham, deacon of St. Nicholas, Cheltenham, same diocese.

The Rev G. C. Eggleton, Rector of St. Peter's, Woking, deacons of Guildford, to be Vicar of St. Nicholas, Woking, same diocese.

The Rev G. R. Farn, Team Vicar of Swindon, Deane, Priest-in-Charge of St. John's, Buntingford, same diocese.

The Rev R. G. Farn, Team Vicar of St. John's, Buntingford, Priest-in-Charge of St. John's, Buntingford, same diocese.

The Rev J. A. Goss, Rector of St. Mary's, Buntingford, Priest-in-Charge of St. John's, Buntingford, same diocese.

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THE ARTS

Cinema: David Bowie in London and Geoff Brown in Edinburgh

Savage and elusive study of cultural oppositions

Merry Christmas
Mr Lawrence (15)
Camden Plaza; ABC
Shaftesbury Avenue

Lords of Discipline
(15)
Plaza 2

Sir Laurens Van der Post calls *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence* "this great and deeply moving film, the only war film I have seen that penetrates deep into the origins and meaning of war"; and, since Sir Laurens wrote the original stories on which the film is based and (according to the credited script writer) worked on early versions of the scenario, he should know what he is talking about. Nevertheless he does rather overstate the case, and it might be fair to question whether the film is concerned with the origins and meaning of war at all, except to the extent that those origins reside in the cultural differences between peoples, which seem much more what the film is about.

Nagisa Oshima's films, but especially *The Ceremony* and *Empire of the Senses*, have all looked critically at Japanese character, society and tradition and the dangers of national preoccupation with death, with archaic codes of honour, with a jealous, hermetic, debilitating sense of racial identity. *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence*, based on Van der Post's novel *The Seed and the Sower*, interwoven with the stories *A Bar of Shadow* and *The Sword and the Doll*, shows the Japanese in confrontation with people and ways of the West.

The setting is a prisoner-of-war camp in Java in 1942. The four main characters are neatly placed in quadrilateral opposition. On the Japanese side are the camp commandant, Captain Yonoi (Ryuichi Sakamoto), and his sergeant, Hara (Takeshi). Their English-speaking captives are Major Celliers (David Bowie) and Colonel Lawrence (Tom Conti), who was the first person narrator of the original Van der Post books. Bridging the gulf of nationality, war, language and culture are spiritual and human connections.

From first sight, Captain Yonoi recognizes both a spiri-

tual and physical attraction to Celliers: the two young men share the same kind of purity and intrusiveness, and also a sense of guilt... Celliers is haunted by a boyhood betrayal of his young brother; Yonoi was away from Japan at the time of an officers' revolt; before the war, and feels he deserted the comrades who were executed for their part in it. Older, and more resigned to life's demands for compromise, Lawrence and Hara find simpler and more human points of contact. Lawrence speaks Japanese and so is able to communicate in language if not in sentiment. Hara from time to time succumbs to human frailties like getting drunk, making jokes and committing acts of kindness as well as cruelty.

The quadrangle offers a valid premise from which to explore the confrontation of opposing philosophies and wills and the human attractions which can remain stronger than national conflicts. In the event, though, the explosion is confused by an excess of incident - beatings, cruelties, fasts, humiliation, challenges between captives and captor that look like the conventional stuff of PoW drama. The sexual origins of Captain Yonoi's curiosity about Celliers, too, now seem understated for the scenes involving the

Samuel Fuller's four-legged time-bomb

It is hardly tee-shirt weather in Edinburgh, but they are being worn just the same - the red ones scream "Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence" (Oshima's film opened the festival last Saturday), the black ones shout "The Oshima Gang". Oshima double-bills dominate the afternoon schedules; despite some colour prints that have faded away to the hues of tired lobster, the films have provided much stimulation, taking us back to the Japanese director's beginnings in the early Sixties when he plunged local audiences into provocative stories of social turmoil and wielded the Cinemascope frame like a clenched fist.

But the festival's undoubted highlight so far has been Samuel Fuller's magnificent *White Dog*, mostly hidden away by its bemused American distributor, Paramount, since completion in 1981 (though it has since surfaced successfully in France). Paramount's perplexity was primarily caused by its subject-matter (derived from a story by Romain Gary): how do you market a film about a German shepherd trained by bigots to attack Blacks and successfully avoid controversy? Yet from the true provocation of Fuller's film lies

not in its material (clearly anti-racist) but in its style. Fuller declares his allegiance to the most basic of cinematic tools: the intense close-up, the editing cut that yokes together contrasting viewpoints.

White Dog tosses us back and forth between the dog's fierce stare, the implacable eyes of the black animal trainer attempting the dog's re-education and a cheeseburger dangled as bait; the simple technique generates immense emotional power. Fuller also pulls off several virtuous thriller sequences, outlandishly concluding one of the dog's attacks with an out-of-camera mauling before a church stained-glass window representing St Francis. The script occasionally lags behind, though the right note of journalistic urgency is struck by the boyfriend of the dog's amazed new owner: "Come on, Julie, you've got a four-legged time-bomb!" Edinburgh is the ideal place for the film's British unveiling - in 1969, the film festival's Fuller retrospective spearheaded European appreciation of this dynamic cinema primitive.

Documentaries and independent films abound here; quality, as expected, seesaws hour by hour. Friedhelm Brückner's



Celliers (David Bowie) challenges Yonoi (Ryuichi Sakamoto) over the threatened execution of the British C.O. (Jack Thompson)

western characters he decided to "westernize" the script. It is hard to say whether this was a good idea: certainly the film now - surprisingly for Oshima - lacks any distinctive style.

Bowie as actor is at the best of times unpredictable, clearly always in need of confident direction. This character is a

charming, responding conscientiously to the needs of the moment (when Yonoi calls him "an evil spirit" he instantly leaps into that role, for instance) but never presenting a clear and consistent face on which we can fix. Yonoi's yearning, The mysteries of the role are compounded by a peculiar and somewhat embarrassing little

movie entertainment he lays on for his Japanese prison guards for no very discernible dramatic purpose. The professional attack and trio of Tom Conti's Lawrence only add to the shadows surrounding Bowie's role.

Oshima has always expressed a preference for using non-professional actors, which - apart from the obvious commercial advantages - may explain his choice of Bowie. Ryuichi Sakamoto, a slightly built and beauteous rock musician who is Japan's equivalent to David Bowie, and Takeshi, a thick-set and irreverent stand-up comedian with a tremendous following in Japan, give to a western audience the most impressive performances in the film. Of course it may be that in Japan (where the film is a huge box-office success) the audience is unaccustomed to war films which show the enemy at close quarters; it is said that the public complains of Sakamoto's mod and mumbbling diction, and falls into paroxysms of inappropriate laughter at Takeshi's every move.

Lords of Discipline offers us an American equivalent to the peculiar combinations of brutality and superstitious ritual that make part of the Samurai code. Based upon a partly autobiographical novel by Pat Conroy, it is located in a fictitious but not wholly fantastic military academy in Carolina. The battle-scarred actor Sterling Hayden, subject of the documentary portrait *Pharos of Chaos*, looks from the Himalayas himself bearded, clothed in sackcloth and sandals, with a mind half-lost in its own personal universe. Two young German film-makers, Wolf-Eckart Bübler and Manfred Blank, visit Hayden's riverboat in France and record his ramblings on drink, his Hollywood career and his craven appearance before the Un-American Activities Committee. Once one edits out the interrogative noises, the repetitions and anecdotal cut-offs, there is fascinating substance in Hayden's words; we have to do the editing ourselves, however, as the film-makers seem even more dishevelled than their subject.

The programme attempted, in what was apparently supposed to be a jocular manner, to investigate the general secretiveness of British society and suggested, quite rightly, that most officials enjoy the experience of being entrusted with "confidential" information. It gives them something not to talk about it seems, by the way, that civil servants really do hang net curtains at the windows of their offices; they are the Brighton landladies of government.

Television Complex frights

Walter Cronkite, who looks very much like a contemporary version of Big Brother, presented 1984 (BBC1) with that heavily portentous tone which seems typical of American television journalists. He also had his own brand of newsmanship: "Fame came late to George Orwell... What kind of man gave shapes and names to the darkest fears of our age? Certainly a complex man..." And so he went on, adding the usual litany of bad news: Khomeini, Afghanistan, computer banks and torture in South America. Then his own computer produced from the photographs of six dictators a composite portrait of the Orwellian tyrant; the result was the face of a Mexican bandit. We need not fear computers as long as they show no signs of imagination.

As is often the case with American programmes which attempt to deal with Some Important Issues, it was interesting only for the fifth light which it cast upon contemporary American society. There are now a range of ingenious phrases, for example, which shield bureaucrats from ordinary life. An explosion is referred to as an "energetic disassembly"; one is no longer sacked but "selected out" or "defeted". This was a programme, however, to be unswitched or destined.

The sight of the Public Records Office, in Secrets (BBC1), would have kept Orwellians content for days: here was the next best thing to a Ministry of Truth. Christmas cards sent by MI5 officers in 1918 are still classified as secret; perhaps the idea of a "seasonal message" sounded sinister. And researchers there have only just been given access to a dusty confidential file, only to discover that it contained a synopsis from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

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Peter Ackroyd

● The Haili Municipal Theatre presentation of *The Soul of a Jew*, reviewed on Wednesday by Irving Wardle in Edinburgh, is to play at Riverside Studios from next Monday to Thursday.



Northern Sinfonia/
Knussen/Fischer
Albert Hall/Radio 3

Robert Szidon's *The Ring of Eternity*, which was given its first performance at Wednesday's Prom, was commissioned not by the BBC but by Oliver Knussen, who conducted it. It is a most beautifully realized vision, suggested by the first lines of Henry Vaughan's poem *The World*: "I saw eternity the other night/Like a great Ring of endless light..." Szidon says he has attempted to translate the details of Vaughan's opening lines into sound, but on a first hearing I was less aware of any literal equivalences than of a piercingly well-imaged panoply of sound, strikingly clear in outline.

The image of a ring seems less apt to describe what happens than that of an amphitheatre exchange: from the initial laying-out of piano, trumpet solo and wind chorus over strings, the impetus is continually shifted between the string group and the wind group.

Sweeping figurations accommodate power through close imitation (through the effect is not the hypnosis of Ligeti's similar procedure but that of a positive, dramatic unfurling of each idea), and much play is made with an ecstatic, trill-like clearness of sound.

That lesson comes over most forcibly in the second movement, a set of variations that begin as a gavotte scherzo but reaches a much softer, warmer feeling as the carpet is pulled before again and we are left with a low second violin sounding over a mechanical accompaniment in desolation close to Shostakovich's.

There is a similar moment in the finale, entitled "Burleske" and sometimes cited by the irony Mahler associated with this title. But, whatever the links with other composers, this quartet lives in its own world of silvery shadows, and clearly it is a world in which the Melos feel quite at home: disquiet and trepidation are qualities only of the composition.

In Mozart's fugal-finale G major Quartet and Schumann's A major they seemed rather to be taking the music back to their place, where the conversations included supreme confidence, strong inner parts and unquestionable phrasing, but not much of Mozart's levity or Schumann's fitness of spirit.

Concerts in London

impressive moment just before the final climax, trumpets announce a rising theme in unison which is then split up with horns and drums added as if Vaughan's endless light were suddenly seen through a prism.

The kaleidoscopic build-up of sound is then maintained until the last moment, though the effect of the sudden close is not to prolong the vision into eternity but to snatch it rudely from our eyes.

Oliver Knussen conducted a firm, coherent account of the score. The remainder of this concert, conducted by Ivan Fischer, was desperately distinguished. In Imogen Cooper's account of Mozart's F major Piano Concerto, K459, there were many points of admirable musicianship, but her discursive playing had no sharp focus and she was continually undermined - as were Stravinsky and Beethoven elsewhere in the evening - by Fischer's crashingly obvious direction.

Nicholas Kenyon

Vassary/Hirst/
Langridge
Queen Elizabeth Hall

Janáček has made his last appearance at this year's South Bank Summer Music, and with the spirit of Kamila Stösslová, the woman behind both the *Vixen* and the Second String Quartet.

Over this antiphony are single-line passages for the muted percussion, and important, strident duets for the pairs of horns and trumpets in an

performance of the *Diary of One who Disappeared* by Philip Langridge, Linda Hirst and Tamas Vassary which was utterly compelling in its fusion of meticulous, minutely observed detail and vibrant unpredictability.

It was a pity that the opportunity was missed to exploit the hall's facilities and grant for once Janáček's wish that this drama of dream, seduction and surrender "be sung in semi-darkness, if possible with reddish lighting"; and a pity, too, that the performers did not risk even longer, more eloquent pauses at crucial dramatic points.

But this was a performance of subtle flickering, volatile emotions, rather than of overtly dramatic strokes in Mr Langridge's voice, passion would quiver through a portamento, tenderness blend into harmonic change, and muscle flex to the full only to carry the force of Janáček's arching "melodic curves of speech" as in his final, fiercest and resilient top C.

Linda Hirst's was a strange

and strong-edged vocal characterisation, with the three off-stage voices (Sarah Leonard, Judith Rees and Joyce Jarvis) providing, in their perfectly judged acoustic balance, a haunting distancing right at the drama's heart.

Dialogue, reflection and undercurrent were indivisibly shared in Mr Vassary's piano playing.

Hilary Finch

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starring
Reiner Goldberg
as Parsifal.
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GLC

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

cock-eyed as this is not a fair trial of anybody's ability to sing. The LSO were clear and forward, but not sparkling or clever; themes were played in the conversational manner of normal chamber music, not refined into super-excellence. The Delmé also included a rarity, Caplet's *Conte fantastique sur Poe's Masque de la Red Death* with solo harp (John Marston). For as long as I have known of this piece, I have been intrigued. I am intrigued no longer.

Paul Griffiths

Melos Quartet of
Stuttgart
Queen's Hall

The Edinburgh Festival's rediscovery of Zemlinsky took another large step forward yesterday morning, when the Melos Quartet from Stuttgart played the third of his Four Quartets. Composed in 1924, the piece belongs very much to the same period as *The Dwarf*, seen earlier in the week, and like that opera it is a tale of beauty and the beast.

Each of the four movements includes grotesque, stumbling little ideas, or pulsating rhythmic ostinati along with long melodies that may dance in the sunlight of a clear tonality but unsophisticated account by the

are themselves sublimely free from the shackles of key. Often it turns out too, as it does in Zemlinsky's Second Quartet, that the cracked motif and the airy line are drawn out of the same pattern of notes: beauty and the beast are one.

That lesson comes over most forcibly in the second movement, a set of variations that begins as a gavotte scherzo but reaches a much softer, warmer feeling as the carpet is pulled before again and we are left with a low second violin sounding over a mechanical accompaniment in desolation close to Shostakovich's.

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Paul Griffiths

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The new play by Christopher Hampton, "A fascinating play about the colony of German writers who found themselves exiled in Tinseltown in the 1940s..." (Michael Billington, *Guardian*, at the play's premiere in Los Angeles last year)

Low price previews: Tonight, Tomorrow, Mon. Wed at 7.15. Tues at 2.00 & 7.15. Options: Thurs at 7.00. Then Sept 5, 6, 7 (m&s), 14, 15 (Bargain Night), 21, 22, 23, 24 (m&s), 26, 27. Production is at The Bristol Hippodrome Oct 3 to 8.

**Investment
and
Finance**
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STOCK EXCHANGES

FT Index: 717.4 up 0.8
 FT Gilt: 79.71 up 0.8
 FT All Shares: 456.14 up 1.62
 Bargains: 19.701
 Datastream US\$ Leaders
 Index: 100 up 0.73
 New York: Dow Jones
 Average (latest): 1181.71
 down 2.54
 Tokyo: Nikkei Dow Jones
 Index 914.91 down 4.27
 Hongkong: Hang Seng
 Index 581.91 down 0.27
 Amsterdam: 146.8 down 2.9
 Sydney: ASX Index 697.7
 down 10.7
 Frankfurt: Commerzbank
 Index 933.30 down 3.20
 Brussels: General Index
 133.45 down 0.42
 Paris: CAC Index 137.7 up
 0.3
 Zurich: SKA General Index
 285.2 down 0.5

CURRENCIES

LONDON CLOSE
 Sterling \$1.5080 down 1.1
 cents
 Index 84.7 down 0.8
 DM 3.9750
 Ff 11.9750
 Yen 368.50
 Dollar
 Index 127.6 up 0.1
 DM 2.8285
NEW YORK LATEST
 Sterling \$1.5030
INTERNATIONAL
 ECUS 0.570857
 SDREO 0.692933

INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates:
 Bank base rates 9%
 Finance houses base rate 10
 Discount market loans week
 fixed 9%
 3 month interbank 9%
 Euro-currency rates:
 3 month dollar 9%
 3 month DM 5%
 3 month Fr 15-14%

US rates:
 Bank prime rate 11.00
 Fed funds 9%
 Treasury long bond 103%
 103%
ECFS Fixed Rate Sterling
 Export Finance Scheme IV
 Average reference rate for
 interest period July 6 to August
 2, 1983 inclusive: 9.98 per
 cent.

GOLD

London fixed (per ounce):
 am \$422.50 pm \$423.26
 close \$423.50 £280-280.76
 unchanged
 New York latest: \$423.25
 Krugerrand (per coin):
 \$436-437.50 (£289-290)
 Sovereigns (new):
 \$99.75-100.75 (£68-66.75)

*Excludes VAT

TODAY

Interim Martin Black, L. M.
 Ericsson, Exeter Building and
 Construction, Investment Trust
 of Guernsey, Miss World
 Group, Scottish Northern
 Invest, Wagon Finance, Ward
 Holdings, Highgate & Job,
 Raybeck.
 Economic statistics: None
 announced.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Davenport Knitwear, Allen
 House, Newark Street, Liverpool (11.30)
 Lennon Group, Lord Daresbury
 Hotel, Daresbury, Warrington,
 Cheshire (noo) Rotaprint,
 Cumberland Road, off Honey-
 pot Lane, NW8 (11.30)
 Segomana Group, 185 St
 Vincent Street, Glasgow
 (12.00)

**Trade figures
hit sterling**

Sterling was under sporadic
 pressure in the foreign exchange
 markets yesterday because of
 the poor July trade figures and
 recent gloomy forecasts for
 the economy.

Market trading was thin as
 sterling fell 1.1 cents against the
 dollar and closed at \$1.5080.
 Against the German mark, the
 pound fell below DM4, closing
 3.5 pence lower on the day at
 DM3.9750, and it lost 10
 cents against the French
 franc to FF11.9750.

The pound's trade-weighted
 value against a basket of
 currencies ended the day 0.9
 lower at 84.7.

The dollar was on the
 sidelines after its volatile
 movements of recent weeks but
 ended fractionally higher
 against the mark at DM2.6365 -
 up 15 points.

● Louise International
 finance is raising a £m 75m
 (£15m), seven-year Eurobond
 with a yield of 9 per cent.
 market sources have reported.
 The bond is priced at par.

Battle for games manufacturer is not over, says BPCC chief

Waddington beats off Maxwell as institutions switch allegiance

By Jonathan Clegg

An about-turn by three institutional shareholders yesterday switched an expected victory from Mr Robert Maxwell in his battle for control of John Waddington, the Monopoly games manufacturer.

The three institutions withdrew their acceptance of the £18m bid from Mr Maxwell's British Printing and Communication Corporation at the eleventh hour. News of the about-turn came as Mr Maxwell was ready to declare that he had received more than 50 per cent acceptances and the bid was therefore unconditional.

The three institutions account for 5.5 per cent of Waddington's shares. This holding, together with the support already promised to the

friendly to the Waddington camp."

Later Mr Maxwell said: "The battle is not over yet - people can come undone from their sides as well, you know."

He intends to extend his share offer today from its present closing date of this afternoon. No decision on the offer has been taken but the offer cannot be extended beyond two weeks under takeover rules.

The other about-turns came from the Scottish Amicable life insurance company, which has about 0.9 per cent of the shares, and a smaller holder with 0.2

Scottish Amicable said last night that it had previously accepted the cash alternative which closed last week and cannot be re-opened.

Shareholders who accept a takeover can withdraw before it is declared unconditional.

to withdraw their acceptances. This borders on harassment."

Mr Maxwell's advisers will now lobby hard to get some of the pro-Waddington board shareholders to change their minds.

Kleinfelder said that Mr Maxwell had no new information to give shareholders, he could not make a new offer under the Takeover Panel's rules and the cash offer had already closed.

But the firm admitted that although the battle had "taken a fundamental turn", the fight was not yet over.

Waddington has enjoyed the support of two big shareholders, British Assurance and M&G, which account for about a fifth of the shares.

But arrears to banks are now put at £1.3bn and rising and interest payments are said to be 53 days' overdue. This is dangerously close to the 60 days which would force American banks to classify these loans as non-performing for all to see.

The interim results include the £1.6m costs associated with the closure of a loss-making Capertonics electronics factory in the US, and losses of £800,000 from BSR's British operations, which employ 4,000 people in the West Midlands.

The British audio and kitchenware businesses should be trading in the black by the end of the year.

An important part of the group's strategy in Britain is to switch production to new growth areas.

Mr Wyllie said that there will be further rationalization and divestment of activities within the group, but no redundancies are planned in Britain.

BSR's shares rose by 10% to 175p.

The drawings are tied to release of IMF money, but there will be no more of this until late September or October, after the IMF board has formally approved a new programme for Brazil.

The commercial banks could easily waive this condition. Professor Neto met M Jacques de Larosière, managing director of the IMF, secretly in Paris this week. A nod from him, indicating that the IMF is happy, would probably be enough. Many bankers are expecting a request along these lines from the advisory group of banks.

Barring another historic loosening of the monetary reins by the Federal Reserve to bring down interest rates, along the lines of its action last summer when Mexico was testing on the brink, both banks and governments may be forced to consider much more painful and radical measures.

Banks may have to consider such taboo options as rescheduling interest or reducing it in the form of trade credits.

Governments, for their part, will have to recognize that the banks cannot do it all on their own. And if this lends greater urgency to the search for long-term solutions to the debt crisis, so much the better.

City Editor's Comment

Cash flow problems on a massive scale

Brazil's original multi-billion dollar rescue package fell apart because it was too small and Brazil was unable to meet conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund. Bankers are now working on the second phase. But even if events proceed smoothly in the next few months, it is far from clear who is going to do the bailing out this time.

Then, however, the real problems start. How to satisfy Brazil's external financing needs of about \$2.6bn for the rest of this year and £3.9bn next year?

Commercial bankers are adamant that they cannot fork out the whole £6.6bn and the popular assumption is that governments/official agencies will chip in at least £1.9bn. Quite who these governments/official agencies are remains a mystery.

Crippling Debts

As for the commercial banks, those with large exposures to Brazil may feel there is no alternative to pumping in large sums.

But will they be able to persuade their smaller brethren to contribute to what could be one of the biggest syndicated loans ever, for a country in Brazil's position?

Even the bullying of the IMF and central banks may not be sufficient.

Interest payments on its huge debts are crippling Brazil and any amount of internal economic adjustment is not going to reduce that burden.

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IN BRIEF

Bigger stake for Holmes a Court

Mr Robert Holmes a Court, the Australian financier, has increased his holdings in Fleet Holdings, the Express Newspapers group, from 3 per cent to 10 per cent. He is looking for a further significant improvement in profits during the second half of the year. An indication of the board's confidence in progress is the promise to recommend payment of a final dividend of at least 1.5p this year.

The refinancing helped cut short-term debts from £42m to 175p.

Surge in leading shares

WALL STREET

Dupont fell 1/8 to 52; Lockheed fell 3 5/8 to 103.

General Dynamics fell 2 5/8 to 46; Eastman Kodak fell 1/8 to 67 3/8; Delta Airlines fell 1/8 to 30 and Minnesota Mining fell 1/8 to 79.

In the broader market, declining issues were ahead of gainers about four to three.

International Business Machines 1 1/8 to 115 3/8; General Electric fell 1/2 to 47; General Motors fell 1/8 to 66 3/4; Dupont fell 1/8 to 52; Lockheed fell 3 5/8 to 103.

NCR was 112 7/8, up 1 7/8; Raytheon at 47 1/2 was down 7/8; Mead Corporation was unchanged at 33; Colco at 34 5/8 was down 1 1/8; Exxon at 37 7/8 was unchanged; Allied Corporation at 50 was up 1/8.

Trade Development Bank Holding S.A.

Luxembourg

Announcement to Shareholders

Approval was given at the General Meeting of Shareholders of Trade Development Bank Holding S.A. ("TDBH") held on August 25, 1983 for all items on the agenda, including a distribution - for each 100 TDBH shares outstanding - of a dividend consisting of US\$ 800 in cash, 27* American Express Company ("Amexco") common shares, and 10 warrants to purchase 20* Amexco common shares at US\$ 27.50 per share.

The following should be considered by shareholders who have TDBH shares in bearer form:

1. As from the distribution date (August 29, 1983) each shareholder should present coupons 12, 13 and 14 of his TDBH shares either directly to one of the paying agents mentioned herebelow, or request his own bank to do so on his behalf. Coupons 12 will be exchanged for cash in US\$, coupons 13 for Amexco common shares, and coupons 14 for Amexco warrants.

2. Upon presentation of coupons 13 and 14 the paying agents will acknowledge to the shareholder his right to the appropriate number of shares and warrants, and, in accordance with his instructions, have the certificates made out, registered, and delivered.

3. There will be no delivery of fractional shares or warrants. Fractional rights will be paid in cash at the market value of the shares and warrants as of the date of presentation of the coupons.

The distribution will continue until October 28, 1983. After October 28, 1983, the Company will sell any shares and warrants of American Express Company not distributed due to non-presentation of coupons 13 and 14, and will hold the US dollar proceeds of such sale for any payment against future presentation of coupons 13 and 14. Presentation of coupons 12, 13 and 14 as outlined hereabove should be made to any of the paying agents listed below:

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 Banque Internationale à Luxembourg S.A., 2 Boulevard Royal, Luxembourg
 Manufacturers Hanover Bank Belgium, 13, rue de Ligne, 1000 Brussels
 Manufacturers Hanover Banque Nordique, 20 rue de la Ville-L'Etape, 75008 Paris
 Trade Development Bank, 30 Monument Street, London EC3R 8LH
 Trade Development Bank (Luxembourg) S.A., 34 avenue de la Porte-Naue, Luxembourg

*calculated after the effect of the 3 for 2 stock split of 10th August 1983



Sir Walter: progress in components talks

Sizewell victory for industry

**By David Young
Energy Correspondent**

British industry has responded to a challenge from the nuclear power programme to take orders worth millions of pounds from foreign companies which were originally in line to supply equipment for the Sizewell nuclear power station in Suffolk.

After talks with the Central Electricity Generating Board, British suppliers have met specification requirements which means that apart from several million pounds worth of specialized equipment most of the overall estimated cost of £1.147m will be spent in Britain.

Originally 10 per cent of the contract had been earmarked to be met by overseas suppliers. Sir Walter Marshall, chairman of the CEBG, said yesterday: "In recent weeks we have made substantial progress in discussions with potential suppliers of components. We are now confident that the majority, both in number and value, can be supplied by British manufacturers.

"It is not possible to be precise, but as a result we now

expect the hardware import content of Sizewell will only be a few tens of millions of pounds and not the £100m we originally expected. In terms of overall value the import content would be very small indeed".

Sir Walter was speaking during a visit to Sheffield Forgemasters, a private company formed from the forging and melting facilities of British Steel and Firth Brown, which ironically will not be able to

APPOINTMENTS

Change at Midland

Midland Bank: Mr Hugh O'Brien, group treasurer; Thomas Cook, is to be assistant general manager (financing operations).

The British Overseas and Commonwealth Banks' Association: Mr Peter Waller, a general manager of Standard Chartered Bank, has been elected deputy chairman. Mr G. T. Watson has been appointed honorary secretary.

Sun Alliance Insurance Group: Mr J. Rochelle, manager, computer department, is to be group computer manager of management services and planning division. Mr E. G. Coward is now group commercial underwriting manager with responsibility for home division, commercial underwriting and overseas division international underwriting.

Hawker Siddeley Group: Mr S. D. Goward has joined the board of Brook Control Gear as director and general manager. Mr J. L. Fleming has been appointed to the board of Crompton Instruments (South East Asia), as director and general manager.

Supra Sureparts: Mr A. A. Long has become managing director.

Eskilstuna Securities: Mr William Tyne is joining the board with special responsibility for the company's capital markets activities in the US. He will be based in London.

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Marketing and advertising: Torin Douglas

How the building societies have forgotten about profitability

BUILDING SOCIETY ADVERTISING 1981/82

(£'000s as measured by Meal, "broad" rate card)

	Spent	1981 Rank	RTV	Spent	1982 Rank	RTV
Halifax	4625	2	53	6808	1	65
Abbey National	4574	4	51	5298	2	25
Leeds Permanent	3579	3	44	4850	3	69
Bradford & Bingley	2504	6	35	4481	4	20
Nationwide	2263	5	48	3755	5	55
Anglia	1614	7	57	2753	6	55
Woodwich	2065	4	70	2480	7	76
Leicester	775	9	-	1795	8	57
Alliance	499	12	-	1888	9	59
Provincial	1190	8	38	1548	10	50

Despite recent problems, the change of approach and huge increase in marketing expenditure (£44m on advertising last year, compared with £4m ten years ago) seems at first sight to have been amply justified. Last year the building societies recorded the highest net receipts in their history and all but one of the top ten societies, which tend to be the biggest spenders, increased their assets by 17 per cent or more.

"Perhaps that suggests that societies' marketing strategies were highly successful," says one building society executive, Mr Richard Lacy, and most societies might agree. "I believe that is a very naive view of our industry's performance," he adds.

Many societies seem to have spent much of the last two years raising extra funds at the highest cost, advertising premium-rate accounts and transferring a huge volume of profitable share account funds.

This, to me, is not carefully planned marketing — it is the strategy of growth at all costs." Mr. Lacy is not against building societies spending heavily on advertising and marketing. Indeed, as general manager in charge of marketing at the Leicester Building Society, he has spent as much as most on television commercials and launch of new schemes, most notably the Leicesterscard and a tie-up with National Girobank that has given the society 20,000 new Post Office outlets. The Leicester was the 10th biggest society last year, with assets of £2,060m.

His concern is that most societies have lost sight of the need for profitability, the race for growth and market share. In this, they are no different from some consumer marketing

This has been achieved by



On the road: touring building society in TV commercial

concentrating the society's of their business from share marketing efforts on increasing share accounts and the next 11 only 50 per cent. Three years ago, nearly 80 per cent of the industry's funds was held in share accounts.

The marketing challenge for the Leicester was to make its share account attractive to investors, despite the fact that every other building society was offering the same rate of interest and that other societies had more branches. The answer to the first problem was the Leicesterscard — a discount available to share account

holders — and the other was the link-up with National Girobank.

The Leicesterscard was devised by Mr Lacy and his newly-appointed advertising agency, Wight Collins Rutherford Scott.

According to Mr Robin Wight, the agency chairman:

"Research showed us that there

was no great difference in the minds of the public between the Leicester and other societies, so we developed the Leicesterscard as a 'separator', to distinguish,

The Leicesterscard offers share-account holders cheque book accounts and personal loans, together with discounts on a wide range of goods and services.

The launch, in February last year, received great publicity even before the first advertising — positioning the Leicester as the "Mortise" — began. "In the space of 10 months, we received applications for 125,000 Leicesterscards," says Mr Lacy. "We have now had more than 200,000 and by the end of the year it will be 300,000."

In the month after the launch, the Leicester opened a record number of accounts and the growth has continued.

Yet the fact remains that the other big societies drew in deposits faster last year by their cruder method of offering interest premiums. The Leicester now seems likely to hedge its bets and follow the other societies' tactics in addition to its own marketing efforts.

The five biggest societies are to offer a 1½ per cent differential over basic share rate from September 1, and Mr Lacy believes that Leicester has at least built a stronger springboard from which to challenge them on their own terms. An announcement is possible within the week.

DEREK CROUCH

Interim Report for the Half Year to 30th June, 1983

	1983 First six months £m 2000's	1982 First six months £m 2000's	Year £m 2000's
Turnover	28,825	28,789	59,505
Earnings before Tax and Interest	857	1,345	2,613
Interest Payable	680	834	1,739
Earnings after Tax	177	414	874
Charges and Taxation	285	210	[306]
Dividends	203	203	630
Earnings per Share	2.29p	1.60p	6.5p

Opencast mining in the U.K. is still profitable, but at a reduced level due principally to the continuing restrictions being placed on output over and above contractual amounts.

In the U.S.A., coal markets are also suffering from the world surplus and Power Inc. the company set up in the U.S.A. five years ago, is facing a difficult future.

Derek Crouch has now taken complete control of Power Inc. with effect from 18th July by buying out, for a nominal sum, the 40% minority interest held by the two American fuel distribution firms who partnered Derek Crouch in setting up the venture in 1978.

The principal asset of Power Inc. is some 20,000 acres of coal-bearing land in central Pennsylvania with reserves estimated at 200 million tons of recoverable coal for open cast mining.

A 21.75m tonnage plant was commissioned by Power Inc. last year to upgrade the quality of the output and open the way to improved outlets and prices and as a result of the improvement of quality Power Inc. has maintained its share of a highly competitive market.

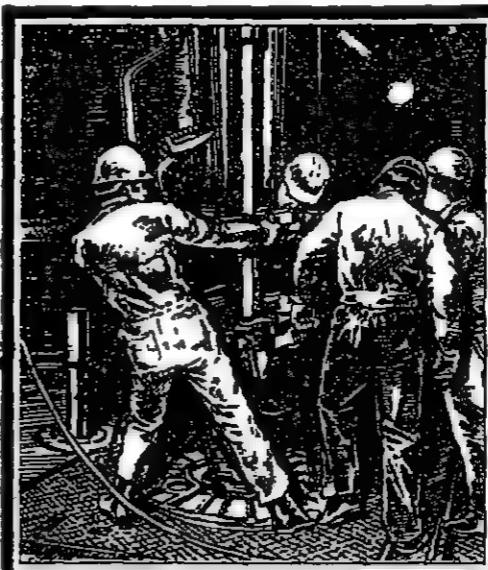
The Board believes that, although the coal market in the U.S.A. is, as in other countries, so soft at the moment, the longer term prospects are good. Further investment required will be unable to go along this road; as a result they agreed to sell their interests in Power Inc. to Derek Crouch. They will, however, continue to act as selling agents for Power Inc. although not on an exclusive basis. The Board believes that the consolidation of Derek Crouch's U.S. interest will bring benefits in the longer term.

On the construction side, the Company is continuing its search for more opportunities in private development, reducing its dependence on the public sector. Claims for final accounts are still proving extremely difficult to progress and finalise. Claims are only taken into account when signed.

As yet, there are no signs of an upturn in the construction industry.

The Directors of Derek Crouch intend to pay a maintained interim dividend of 1.63p which will be payable on 28th October, 1983.

DEREK CROUCH PLC
Head Office: Peterborough PE6 7UW
Telephone:
Peterborough (0733) 222341 Telex: 32128



Drillers at work on the British operated Beatrice oil platform.

British Oil's first interim results – a successful period

Consolidated Profit and Loss Account (Unaudited)	Six Months ended 30.6.83 £ million	For Year ended 31.12.82 £ million
Turnover	568.8	1,080.0
Operating profit	287.2	544.9
Net interest payable	(12.4)	(30.6)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	274.8	514.3
Taxation		
Supplementary petroleum duty	—	(16.2)
Petroleum revenue tax	(138.1)	(152.1)
Corporation tax	(83.5)	(96.8)
Profit on ordinary activities after taxation before extraordinary item	53.2	102.6
Extraordinary item (Privatisation expenses)	—	(3.6)
Profit for the financial period	53.2	99.0
Dividends payable	(16.5)	(18.8)
Amount set aside to reserves	36.7	80.2
Earnings per share	10.64p	n/a
Funds generated from operations less tax paid	276.5	577.3
Additions to fixed assets	153.9	316.3

Note: No comparison has been made with the six months ended 30 June 1982 since during that period the business was wholly under the control of The British National Oil Corporation and therefore, profits on a strict comparison basis that used for the six months ended 30 June 1983, are not available. Future interim reports will include a comparison with the same period of the previous year.

Review of Activities

British Oil's equity production for the six months to 30 June 1983 remained steady at around 148,000 barrels of oil per day. During the period, the Company re-affirmed its position as the most active explorer on the United Kingdom Continental Shelf. Of the 35 exploration wells drilled in the period, Britoil was involved in 12 of them — 5 as operator and 7 as a venture partner.

Also during the first six months, an application was made to the Government to develop the North Sea's first condensate field, North Brae, in which Britoil has a 20% interest. In addition, the Board agreed to support an application to develop the Victor gas field in which Britoil has a 35% interest.

In the international arena, the Company recently formed, as operator, a bidding group which will apply for Danish acreage later this year. Also, an agreement was concluded which gives Britoil its first venture in the United States and which provides access to a range of on-shore exploration and development acreage. As a result, the Company now has acreage in five overseas countries. In one of these areas, Dubai, development work commenced on the first phase of the Margham condensate field in which Britoil has a one-third interest.

Results

Operating profit for the six months to 30 June 1983 amounted to £287.2 million. The turnover of £568.8 million reflects an average daily oil production of 157,900 barrels (146,800 in 1982) whilst the deterioration in the dollar/sterling exchange rate, which more than compensated for the fall in the dollar oil price early in 1983, raised the average sterling realisation per barrel to \$19.83 (\$19.15 in 1982).

Dividends

As indicated at the time of the Offer for Sale, the Directors intend to pay an interim dividend of 3.3p per share. Payment will be made on 14 October 1983 to shareholders on the register at the close of business on 15 September 1983.

For a copy of the full interim report please complete and return the coupon to the Company Secretary: Britoil plc, 191 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5JL. Existing shareholders will receive the Report shortly.

Name _____

Address _____



Britoil
Enterprise in Energy

BSR INTERNATIONAL PLC

To obtain copies of the full Interim report please write to: The Secretary, BSR International PLC, High Street, Wellington, Shropshire DY8 4PG, England

Cricket: England rescued from early troubles after Tavar goes in second over and Gower is hit on the head

England's hopes are high as Botham and Randall come bouncing back

By John Woodcock
Cricket Correspondent

TRENT BRIDGE: England have scored 362 for seven against New Zealand.

England were extricated from their customary troubles by Botham and Randall when the fourth Cornhill Test started yesterday. Coming together at 169 for 5, they added 186 with a really splendid piece of bating. The effect on the balance of the match was devastating. At a quarter past three New Zealand must have been fancying their chances of winning it by close of play; they were on the way to losing.

Randall's 83 gave enormous local pleasure; universal pleasure in fact. What a wonderfully silent creature he is. He always comes bouncing back, laying his game and harbouring no grudges. Having dropped him from the Lord's Test, the selectors must have watched him yesterday, playing as well as I have ever seen him, with pleasure mixed with some embarrassment. He knows now that he will be needing his unusual kit again next winter.

The best news of the day was Botham's return to his form of a couple of years ago. As at Lord's last week, when he took Somerset to the finals of the NatWest Trophy, he played with massive authority. There were three of those backhand sweeps I don't care for; but even they all went for four, one off a full toss from Bracewell, being flicked away like an angled backhand volley. Botham had batted 23 times for England since making his last 100 for them. Now the prodigal son returned. There can be much rejoicing at that.

For half its course, the day bore a close resemblance to the opening day of the third Test at Lord's. Then, too, England batted first, and it was Gower again who gave the innings what early confidence it had. Not only that. Whereas at Lord's he was badly missed

when 21, yesterday Lees put him down at the wicket, a straightforward catch, when he was 15. The outfield, artificially green, kept the shine on the ball until Botham and Randall removed it; the pitch, almost unnaturally brown and damp to start with, allowed it to turn a little.

In the end the difference from Lord's was that Randall and not Taylor came in at No. 7. This was because England had left out Thomas, a disappointment not so much because it reduced their bowling depth but because Thomas will not be one of the bowlers. The case for preferring Thomas to Cowans seems scarcely to have arisen in the selectors' minds, though Thomas would have made the more interesting choice.

Tavar was out to the last ball of the second over, superbly caught at third slip by Cairns, one-handed and diving to his left. England, against the ropes, were kept there when a few balls later Gower ducked into a bouncer from Hadlee. He took his eye off the ball and so broke the golden rule. Peter May said he thought the best player of the bouncer he had ever seen was Reg Simpson, who was a swaver, not a ducker. Gower, bare-headed when he was hit, spurned with fine disdain the

Scorecard

ENGLAND First Innings	
C. Tavar	100 not out
J. D. Gower	83
A. J. Lamb	100 not out
D. M. Botham	100
R. W. Taylor	not out
N. P. Cowans	100
Extras (b, lb, n.b, nb)	38

Total (7 wickets)

100 runs & N. G. Cowans to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-5, 2-84, 3-136, 4-159, 5-169, 6-363, 7-386.

BOWLING stats (dec'd): Hadlee, 52-5-95-1; Cairns, 52-5-95-1; Cowans, 52-5-95-1; Gower, 52-5-95-1; Lamb, 52-5-95-1; Botham, 52-5-95-1; Taylor, 52-5-95-1; Extras (b, lb, n.b, nb)

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Steel gives an ultimatum on party manifesto

By Our Political Staff

Mr David Steel has made clear to his fellow MPs that should he be stripped of authority over the contents of the Liberal Party election manifesto he would find it impossible to continue as leader of the party.

All 16 of Mr Steel's party colleagues in Parliament have received a four-page letter in which he sets out his views on control of the manifesto and other issues to come before the Liberal Assembly in Harrogate next month.

Mr Steel insists that he is "certainly willing and indeed keen to continue the leadership of the party". But his letter is said to be critical of both the Association of Liberal Councillors and the Young Liberals.

MPs were at pains to play down the suggestion that Mr Steel's letter constitutes another threat to resign. In a postscript, Mr Steel recalls that the only threat he has made to resign was over the formulation of the Lib-Lab Pact when Mr James Callaghan was prime minister.

With Mr Steel on his sabbatical and no meetings planned before the assembly, MPs maintained it would have been unusual had he not written to them setting out his position.

A telephone call by *The Times* to Mr Steel's home at Etruria Bridge confirmed that the Liberal leader, though much recovered from his viral infection, is sticking by his intention not to speak to the press until the assembly.

Though the word "resign" does not appear in the letter to MPs, the plain message is that were the assembly to take away

Alliance 'real threat'

Continued from page 1
opposition because it was the easier party to beat. I thought she was then trying to cling to Labour because she was sure she could always beat them."

But he added: "I think the Alliance will undoubtedly replace Labour as the main party of opposition and as the main party of government."

Certainly, the campaign for the Labour leadership shows no sign of altering Labour's direction. Mr Roy Hattersley, the main challenger to Mr Neil Kinnock, from the Labour right, has repeatedly shown that he is a wholehearted believer in socialism.

The Alliance, meantime,

provided it can work together without the Labour-style wrangling and infighting which has broken out in the wake of the election result, shows every sign of putting forward policies within the free enterprise framework. Mrs Thatcher's analysis that this is where the main political threat to the Conservatives will lie.

• The Prime Minister returned to work at 10 Downing Street yesterday after a 13-day holiday by Lake Zug in Switzerland.

She was without the dark glasses which she wore after the eye operation at the beginning of this month. She told staff she felt fine.

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The Alliance, meantime,

the leader's control over the manifesto. Mr Steel believes his position would be untenable.

Supporting Mr Steel in an interview on BBC radio yesterday, Mr David Penhaligon, MP for Truro, recalled a 20-minute debate at a past assembly when a brilliant speech by one MP persuaded delegates to vote for free public transport in Britain, "free buses, trains and planes."

He said: "Everyone knew that was lunacy. They can't elevate a 20-minute debate to being some sort of message from on high that I and the rest of the parliamentary party are supposed to carry around from then onwards.

"In essence what the leader is saying is that the Liberal Party, if it really wants to get into the business of getting power in Britain, really does have to do something about its potty fringe at times," he said.

Mr Penhaligon did not elaborate on the identity of those "fringe" elements, but it is believed that about a third of Mr Steel's letter refers to actions of the Association of Liberal Councillors and the Young Liberals. Mr Steel's comments were said by one MP to be "less than flattering".

The National League of Young Liberals and a grassroots organization called Campaign 83 are backing the Daventry Liberal Association motion calling on the assembly to remove the party leader's veto over the manifesto.

Neither Mr Penhaligon nor Mr Alan Beith believe the controversial proposal has any chance of success.

Speculation was ripe in Karachi last night that the martial law regime of President Zia ul-Haq has decided to open talks with the leaders of the banned political parties about the future of the country's democracy.

There was then official confirmation, but the speculation was set off by an administration decision to move at least four of the party leaders from detention in Karachi to a remote government rest house 50 miles away.

Together with the reported presence in the city of senior officers of the Pakistan Intelligence Bureau the move is taken as a portent that General Zia is relenting on his earlier reluctance to involve the parties.

Virtually every organ of public opinion in Pakistan has called for a dialogue with the party leaders about the move back to an elected democracy which General Zia announced unilaterally on August 12.

He has said that the electoral process will be completed by March, 1985 under a constitution amended to suit his tastes. The political parties have been calling for the immediate

abolition of martial law the restoration of the 1973 constitution and for elections now.

Public announcements of the President have taken a line much softer towards the politicians than his former tone. He said in Karachi on Wednesday that the politicians were "as much patriots as we are" and declared that he had been meeting political leaders from time to time in the past, and would continue this practice in the future.

If the President is planning such talk it will do much to take the sting out of the present campaign of unrest against his rule, and his proposed constitutional changes. It will in particular delineate a dramatic appeal circulating in Pakistan yesterday under the name of Begum Nasrat Bhutto, the widow of the executed Prime Minister.

Mrs Bhutto who is ailing in Paris, is chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, her husband's former party, and the PPP distributed the statement which General Zia announced unilaterally on August 12.

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